

Supporting The Development Of The *Catskill Mountain Rail Trail*, Linking The Walkway Over The Hudson To The Ashokan Reservoir, Preserving The Railroad From Kingston to Phoenicia, And Expanding The Region's Interconnected Rail Trail Network Into A World-Class Tourism Destination

WITHDRAWN

Referred to: The Economic Development and Tourism Committee (Chairman Maloney and Legislators Loughran, Maio, Roberts and Wishnick)

Legislator Terry L. Bernardo offers the following:

WHEREAS, the County of Ulster owns 38.6 miles of the former Ulster & Delaware (U&D) Railroad right-of-way, extending from the City of Kingston westward to the Delaware County border at Highmount near Belleayre Mountain; and

WHEREAS, the U&D Railroad corridor runs to and along the Ashokan Reservoir, offering access to incredibly scenic vistas along the northern shore of the Reservoir and providing a unique opportunity to connect urban neighborhoods with open spaces in the Catskill Park; and

WHEREAS, the development of the Catskill Mountain Rail Trail, a new multi-use recreational trail along the U&D corridor, will eventually link to other County rail trails, including the O&W Rail Trail and Wallkill Valley Rail Trail, and eventually connect to the Hudson Valley Rail Trail and Walkway Over the Hudson; and

WHEREAS, the construction of the Catskill Mountain Rail Trail and its connection to other regional trails, in combination with the existing over 2.5 miles of restored Class II track in the City of Kingston and Town of Hurley that is currently used by the Catskill Mountain Railroad for its popular holiday and event trains, will increase tourism to the region, expand small business and economic development opportunities, improve the area's quality of life, and provide significant recreational and public health to residents throughout Ulster County; and

WHEREAS, the Catskill Mountain Railroad has prepared a detailed proposal for dual usage rails with trails for the stretch of track from Kingston out to Ashokan, and this proposal will provide much needed recreational opportunities for area residents and be fully accessible to use by persons with disabilities, senior citizens, and families with young children; and

Draft Resolution No. 0219 April 16, 2013

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WHEREAS, the Catskill Mountain Rail Trail has attracted strong support from U.S. Senator Charles Schumer and New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo, and \$2 million in Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) funding for the project has been included in the 2013-2014 New York State Budget; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Legislature does hereby support the development and construction of the Catskill Mountain Rail Trail, while preserving the railroad from Kingston to Phoenicia, creating a rail-with-trail world-class tourism destination; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be sent to Governor Andrew Cuomo, Senator Charles Schumer, Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, Congressman Chris Gibson, New York State Senators James Seward, John J. Bonacic, William J. Larkin, Jr. and Cecilia Tkaczyk, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, New York State Assemblymembers Kevin A. Cahill, Claudia Tenney, Frank K. Skartados, and Peter Lopez, the Ulster County Railroad Advisory Committee and the Ulster County Trails Advisory Committee,

and move its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES:

NOES:

Passed Committee: Economic Development and Tourism on _____.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

NONE

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