

# VIRGINIA IS FOR LOVERS

February 15, 2022

The Honorable Barry D. Knight  
Pocahontas Building  
900 E. Main St.  
Richmond, Virginia 23219  
Room No: W1312

Dear Delegate Knight:

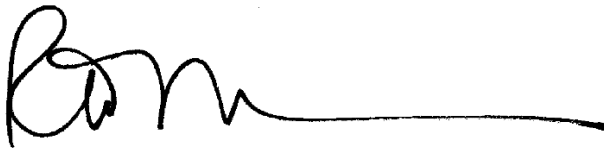
I am writing today to respectfully request your support in funding the Shenandoah Rail Trail project. This project will create important new tourism product for the Shenandoah Valley, helping to attract new visitors and inject critical funds back into our communities. This initiative presents an opportunity to create a trail that is unique to the region and to Virginia, providing pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians with access to some of the most spectacular views in the Commonwealth.

Importantly, eleven communities have joined together to support the development of this trail, which promises to be an important revenue generator for the region and the Commonwealth as a whole. Additionally, the 48-mile multiuse trail will only enhance the region's existing outdoor recreation offerings, while also providing equitable transportation alternatives, spurring local economic development, enriching the community, and connecting residents and visitors to the region's robust historic resources.

As the state agency charged with marketing the Commonwealth as a premier travel destination, we truly believe that the investment in new tourism product is a gamechanger for Virginia communities. This is one of the most powerful ways for Virginia to maintain our spot as a top ten tourism destination in the country and continue our work as a multi-billion dollar industry. The development of the Shenandoah Rail Trail will provide us with another outstanding tourism product to market to travelers from across the country and around the world.

Therefore, we would be grateful for your support of this important tourism development initiative for the Shenandoah Valley and the Commonwealth. We are thankful for your continued leadership, helping to make Virginia the best place to live, work, visit, and play.

Sincerely,



Rita McClenny  
President & CEO