Re: H0335 (Eminent Domain)

Dear Chairman Anderst,

I am writing to you in my capacity as the Chair of the Idaho Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA Idaho) Legislative Committee. APA Idaho represents more than 250 local planning officials, private-sector planners, and planning commission members statewide. I am writing to register my organization's support for H0335.

In 2015, when the language restricting the use of eminent domain for trails and paths was added to Idaho State Code §7-701A, APA Idaho expressed opposition. Each of Idaho's communities are unique and each has their own specific zoning needs. Although eminent domain for trails may not be a concern for the majority of Idaho Communities, for some, the ability to expand trail networks that benefit the residents, the community and the State is a priority. There have been numerous studies that show the health and economic benefit of a robust trail system for residents, the community and the State.

H0335 returns the ability of local communities to obtain trails for walking, running, hiking, bicycling, equestrian use, and commuting through fair payment to the property owner for the strip of land necessary to make these important trail connections and greenbelts. For a number of Idaho communities, this tool will be a benefit to community members, business and the communities themselves. We also wholeheartedly support bills such as this that restore local control to our Idaho communities. APA Idaho respectfully asks that you forward this bill, as it will be a benefit to local jurisdictions.

Sincerely,

Jason Boal – AICP, CFM
APA Idaho Legislative Committee Chair

CC: The Honorable Representative Mike Moyle
    The Honorable Representative Jason A. Monks
    The Honorable Representative Megan Blanksma
    The Honorable Representative Ilana Rubel
    The Honorable Representative John McCrostie
    The Honorable Representative Elaine Smith