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## **Reconciliation Bill Claws Back Hundreds of Millions of Dollars for Trails, Walking and Biking**

*With critical budget decisions on the horizon, active transportation advocates say Congress's move to rescind nearly \$750 million for trail, walking and biking projects through the One Big Beautiful Bill is a major blow*

**WASHINGTON**—When the One Big Beautiful Bill was signed into law on July 4, Congress [rescinded unobligated funding from the Neighborhood Access and Equity Program](#), including as much as \$750 million for trails—a major blow to progress being made to connect trail and active transportation systems nationwide says Rails to Trails Conservancy, the nation's largest trails, walking and biking advocacy organization.

"The Neighborhood Access and Equity Program created new opportunities for people and places by restoring connectivity in communities so that everyone can get where they need to go. Congress is clawing back funds that will prevent communities from repairing damages created by misplaced federal transportation investments and causing unnecessary harm," said Kevin Mills, RTC's vice president of policy.

"One example is in the urgency to make it safer and easier for people to walk and bike. More than 20 people die walking every day, and bicyclists and pedestrians are the most likely road users to be seriously injured or killed. That's why hundreds of places are pursuing connected trail and active transportation networks, creating safe spaces for people to walk and bike so that everyone can get around—whether or not they drive. Now, many of those projects will not receive the investment they were promised, and people's lives are at risk," said Mills.

According to [RTC's analyses](#), municipalities and regional leaders are pursuing trail and active transportation networks in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico, motivated by local and state leaders seeking to create safer mobility options, drive economic opportunity, and deliver quality of life for their residents. In March 2024, [the U.S. Department of Transportation's Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhood grant awards](#) marked the largest one-time federal investment in active transportation infrastructure ever made in response to soaring demand from people and places, and a deeper federal understanding about the unique role of active transportation in creating connections within and between communities. Projects focused solely on trails, walking and biking accounted for 25% of the total \$3 billion in funding, and the vast majority of all of the awarded projects included elements that account for active transportation—making clear the depth of demand for this infrastructure nationwide.

The rescission of these funds in the One Big Beautiful Bill strip away significant investments in critical projects to address inequities in mobility, safe walking and biking, and economic opportunity for rural, suburban and urban communities alike, undermining local and state priorities. Included in the rescission is \$92.7 million awarded to multiple **Alabama** projects that contribute to a statewide trail system connecting people and places and creating new economic and mobility opportunity in rural, suburban and urban regions; \$147 million to connect the Emerald Trail in Jacksonville, **Florida**, connecting 30 miles of trail, 14 historic neighborhoods and schools, hospitals, employment hubs, and retail centers; and \$24 million for **Montana** creating new connections between urban East Missoula and rural Sharon and Marshall, which have been cut off from one another due to a lack of safe walking and biking facilities and physical barriers created by Highway 200 and the railroad overpass.

“This move by Congress is appalling, and it sends a clear message. We need to band together—the public, local and state officials, and champions in Congress—to protect the range of funding that exists for this vital infrastructure,” said Mills. “We will remain vigilant in advancing a federal policy agenda that provides opportunities to overcome this setback, making safe, connected active-transportation infrastructure accessible to all Americans.”

Decades of federal, state and local investment has established a foundation for the nation’s active transportation system that includes over 42,000 miles of multiuse trails, hundreds of developing trail and active transportation networks, and an annual economic impact of more than \$34 billion. Current public funding falls far short of the scale of demand and urgency to provide safe walking and biking routes nationwide. Programs that invest in this infrastructure are woefully oversubscribed, putting the lives of everyone who wants to walk, bike or be active outside at risk. RTC’s [federal policy agenda](#) outlines a bold strategy to build the nation’s essential walking and biking infrastructure through investment and policy reform to deliver the active transportation infrastructure America needs.

Rails to Trails Conservancy is the nation’s largest trails organization—with a grassroots community more than 1 million strong—dedicated to building a nation connected by trails, reimagining public spaces to create safe ways for everyone to walk, bike and be active outdoors. Connect with RTC at [railstotrails.org](http://railstotrails.org) and [@railstotrails](#) on social media.