



December 16, 2013

**Subject: Vote for HB 544; oppose amendments**

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 73 member organizations of the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association, I request your support of HB 544 and ask that you oppose all amendments.

HB 544 would amend the Recreational Use of Land and Water Act (RULWA) to reaffirm the General Assembly's support for *landowners who, out of the goodness of their hearts, open their lands to public use for hunting, hiking, biking and other outdoor recreational purposes*.

The Recreational Use of Land and Water Act isn't delivering on its purpose. It doesn't adequately limit the liability for personal injury or property damage of *private landowners who wish to provide a public service*. It doesn't adequately protect *charitable nonprofits*. And through its inadequacies, it fails people of all walks of life, who are left with fewer opportunities to hike, bike, hunt, bird-watch and otherwise enjoy the outdoors.

HB 544 acknowledges the valuable public service provided by landowners – public and private – who choose to open their land to the public. It *benefits not only these landowners but also the general public*, who get to take advantage of the resulting recreational opportunities.

The Pennsylvania Land Trust Association's member organizations work with landowners to conserve their land and to provide safe and responsible recreational opportunities to the public. Landowner *fear of liability is often the central obstacle* to efforts to establish trails and other recreational opportunities for people of all ages. The obstacle, to the detriment of the public, is frequently insurmountable.


**Voting Membe**

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Allegheny Valley Conservan  
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Allegheny Valley Trails Associati  
Armstrong County Conservancy Charitable Tri  
Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvan  
Bedminster Regional Land Conservan  
Berks County Conservan  
Brandywine Conservan  
Central Pennsylvania Conservan  
Centre County Farmland Tru  
Chestnut Hill Historical Soci  
ClearWater Conservan  
Countryside Conservan  
Delaware Highlands Conservan  
East Nantmeal Land Tru  
Eden Hill Conservan  
Edward L. Rose Conservan  
Evergreen Conservan  
Farm and Natural Land Trust of York Coun  
Foundation for Sustainable Fore  
Fox Chapel Land Conservation Tri  
French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Tri  
French Creek Valley Conservan  
Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Associati  
Heritage Conservan  
Hollow Oak Land Tru  
Independence Conservan  
Lackawanna Valley Conservan  
Lancaster County Conservan  
Lancaster Farmland Tru  
Land Conservancy of Adams Coun  
Lebanon Valley Conservan  
London Britain Land Tru  
Lower Merion Conservan  
Manada Conservan  
Merrill Linn Land & Waterways Conservan  
Mid-Atlantic Karst Conservan  
Mokoma Conservan  
Montgomery County Lands Tri  
Montour Trail Coun  
Mount Nittany Conservan  
Natural Lands Tru  
North American Land Tru  
North Branch Land Tru  
Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservan  
Open Land Conservancy of Chester Coun  
Pennsbury Land Tru  
Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Socie  
Pennypack Ecological Restoration Tri  
Pine Creek Land Conservation Tri  
Pine Creek Valley Watershed Associati  
Pocono Heritage Land Tru  
Regional Trail Corporati  
Schuylkill County Conservan  
Snyder Appraisal Associa  
Somerset County Conservan  
Susquehanna Greenways Partnersh  
The Buck Hill Conservation Foundati  
The Conservation Fund, Pennsylvania Off  
The Land Conservancy for Southern Chester Coun  
The Nature Conservan  
The Radnor Conservan  
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Western Pennsylvania Conservan  
Westmoreland Land Tru  
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Wildlands Conservan  
Willistown Conservation Tri  
Wissahickon Valley Watershed Associati



HB 544, as presently drafted, will ensure public-minded decisions to provide access won't be punished with undue liability. Please support HB 544 and oppose all amendments. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

  
Andrew M. Loza  
Executive Director

*The Pennsylvania Land Trust Association is made up of 73 dues paying, voting conservation organizations that in turn count 120,000 Pennsylvanians as contributors and members.*

*The Association seeks to protect Pennsylvania's special places—the farms, forests, parks and other green spaces that people love—the places that help to ensure healthy, prosperous and secure communities.*

## Officers

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*Affiliations are listed only for identification purposes.*

## Staff

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