

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO.169

Reps. Vaupel, Garza, Sowerby and Witwer offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution to declare October 2, 2019, as Equestrian Trails
2 Day in the state of Michigan.

3 Whereas, Michigan equestrian trails are an international
4 attraction celebrating healthy opportunities to connect with
5 nature. Michigan boasts of more than 1,000 miles of trails
6 throughout the state which continue to grow into a beautiful
7 infrastructure where every season is celebrated. The trails offer
8 varied terrain including towering forests, meadows, single and two
9 track, waterfalls, lake swims, river, and creek crossings; and

10 Whereas, Michigan equestrian trails are beneficial for local
11 communities throughout Michigan by generating substantial economic
12 value through the purchase of land, barns, equipment, trucks,



1 trailers, tractors, supplies, tack, feed, professional services,
2 medicines, and more; and

3 Whereas, Michigan equestrian trails are the home to charity
4 rides which have raised funds for communities across the state. In
5 Allegan County alone, \$270,000 has been raised over the past 45
6 years; and

7 Whereas, The world renowned Shore to Shore Trail was
8 established in 1962 and dedicated in 1964 to provide a pathway to
9 travel and camp by horseback across Michigan. The Shore to Shore
10 Trail is over 220 miles long connecting Empire on Lake Michigan to
11 Oscoda on Lake Huron. Michigan Trail Riders Association created and
12 maintains this trail through volunteer efforts and it is protected
13 as a "national treasure"; and

14 Whereas, Michigan Equestrian Trails are the destination for
15 competitive rides such as competitive mounted orienteering. These
16 rides test your horsemanship, map-reading, and compass skills, and
17 provide enjoyment for all throughout Michigan parks and camps for
18 individuals and teams alike in a family friendly sport; and

19 Whereas, Great Lakes Distance Riders Association organizes
20 numerous endurance, limited distance and competitive trail rides,
21 open to all and ranging in distance from 15-100 miles. The rides
22 take place on gorgeous trails all over the state of Michigan, from
23 the Brighton State Recreation Area in Brighton to the historic Pine
24 Marten Run trail in the Hiawatha National Forest near Munising,
25 while promoting equestrian competition, partnership, and education;
26 and

27 Whereas, Michigan equestrian trails offer fox hunts for sport
28 leading to an exciting and educational experience for horses, dogs,
29 and riders. Battle Creek Hunt in Augusta, Metamora Hunt in

1 Metamora, and Waterloo Hunt in Grass Lake make up the three
2 foxhunting clubs in Michigan. Hunts take members over many miles of
3 trails consisting of open meadows, beautiful wooded trails, creek
4 and river crossings, and natural and man-made obstacles. Hunter
5 paces offered by the clubs provide an opportunity for the public to
6 get a taste for the sport while providing a unique training
7 opportunity for their mounts; and

8 Whereas, Michigan communities are alive and well with equine
9 therapy on Michigan trails. Many facilities like the Cheff
10 Therapeutic Riding Center in Augusta Michigan, Equest Center for
11 Therapeutic Riding, Inc. in Grand Rapids and the Beekman Center in
12 Lansing utilize trails in their lesson programs. Detroit Horse
13 Power includes trail riding in their community outreach program of
14 bringing Detroit youth to interact with horses in a variety of
15 settings. Trail rides provide healthy therapy for individuals with
16 special needs dealing with emotional, mental, physical,
17 psychological, and substance abuse issues. The facilities integrate
18 academic, social, and physical skills using the horse as a
19 catalyst, improving the quality of life, achieving dreams, reaching
20 their highest potential, teaching confidence, leadership, and care
21 for creatures and others; and

22 Whereas, Michigan equestrian trails have received national
23 attention by the television show "Best of America by Horseback"
24 taking place on Mackinac Island where "horses are king" and the
25 island is "the one and only place in our whole country that
26 operates solely with horse power!" according to the March/April
27 issue of 2019 Cowgirl Magazine; and

28 Whereas, Michigan equestrian trails are celebrated with
29 numerous riding facilities which allow the non-horse owning public

1 to enjoy the trails via horseback, including Wolf Lake Ranch where
2 guests enjoy over 6,500 acres of hills, valleys, and secluded
3 forest in the Manistee National Forest. Visitors from this guest
4 ranch declare this area as the "best riding ever!"; and

5 Whereas, Michigan equestrian trails are developed and
6 maintained by many trail associations throughout the state
7 consisting of volunteers working in partnership with state,
8 federal, county, and metropark authorities. These associations have
9 passionately served and volunteered well over \$600,000 in hours and
10 effort over the past two years alone. The trail associations
11 advocate tirelessly to bring awareness to the needs of the trail
12 riders in Michigan. Their volunteer hours and donated dollars go
13 toward the creation of trails, maintenance of trails, designing and
14 improving campgrounds and staging areas, construction of campground
15 corrals, fundraising events, building skills courses, and more, for
16 the enjoyment of all; and

17 Whereas, Michigan equestrian trails are natural resources
18 producing economic value, education, employment, empowerment,
19 emotional, mental, physical, psychological, substance abuse
20 therapy, historical reflections, show, sport, tourism,
21 transportation, and travel; now, therefore, be it

22 Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of
23 this legislative body declare October 2, 2019, as Equestrian Trails
24 Day in the state of Michigan.