

**STATE OF INDIANA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

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July 8, 2021

Mr. Peter Ray
Vice President of Engineering
The Indiana Railroad Company
1500 South Senate Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46225

Dear Mr. Ray:

I am writing to urge the Indiana Railroad Company to establish a pedestrian crossing for the Tecumseh Hiking Trail at Indian Hill Road (IHR) in Brown County. The decision to close the rail crossing at this location has resulted in the blocking of the Trail, adversely impacting hikers.

The Tecumseh Hiking Trail is 42 miles long. It adjoins the Knobstone Hiking Trail in the Hoosier National Forest and connects with a number of other trails to form a trail system spanning over 160 miles and 8 counties. The rail crossing closure has blocked through-hiking on this trail system. Without a pedestrian crossing, the only way to get across the railroad is to take a five to six mile walking detour. For those seeking to backpack or hike across the trail, this is a significant barrier.

I understand the Indiana Railroad Company's concern for public safety. However, I am confident a pedestrian crossing can be established in a safe manner at this location just as pedestrian rail crossings have been established on other trails such as the Appalachian Trail, which runs from Maine to Georgia.

Trail supporters have been working many years to develop a trail system that allows continuous hiking from near the Ohio River to Morgan County. The current blocking of the Tecumseh Trail is significantly disrupting its use and defeats the goal of having long distance hiking opportunities. A detour stretching more than five miles is not a practical work-around for this closure. I hope the Indiana Railroad Company will work with interested stakeholders to once again allow through-hiking along this portion of the trail.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Matt Pierce
State Representative