



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose M. Serrano

Serrano and Englebright Urge Governor to Fund Parks

JOSÉ M. SERRANO April 15, 2010

| ISSUE: **STATE PARKS**

Today Senator José M. Serrano (D-Manhattan/Bronx) and Assemblymember Steve Englebright (D-Setauket) released a letter sent by them to Governor David A. Paterson urging him to adequately fund State Parks in the FY 2010-2011 Executive Budget to prevent park closures throughout the state.

The lawmakers, who have been at the forefront of the issue of protecting State Parks and Historic Sites during the current budget season, expressed concern for not only the long-term fate of these public spaces, but for their well-being during the budget negotiation process.

“It cannot be overlooked that for every second this budget isn’t passed, parks are paying the price,” said Serrano, who Chairs the Senate Committee on Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks and Recreation. “At the moment parks are in a state of limbo- unable to take campground reservations, cut grass, or open basic facilities. The longer this continues the higher the fiscal impact will be on parks and on the state as a whole.”

Due to the inconveniences parks are facing during State Budget negotiations, the letter asks that as budget talks continue, the Governor agree to pass budget extenders that provide

adequate funding to allow the Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation (OPRHP) to begin preparing for the upcoming summer season.

The letter also mentions correspondence sent by the National Park Service to the Governor that threatens to withdraw federal funding if any New York State Parks are closed, as that would render New York non-compliant with the guidelines for the Water Conservation Fund and the Federal Lands to Parks programs.

"The National Park Service wants to ensure that State Parks are operational and that they are providing the services for which they were intended," continued Senator Serrano. "We need to grow out of this recession, and losing federal dollars for parks is a huge step in the opposite direction."

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