



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Darrel J. Aubertine

Senate Acts to Keep Parks & Historic Sites Open

DARREL J. AUBERTINE May 28, 2010

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Lawmakers forge agreement with Governor to fund full operation of parks, historic sites

ALBANY (May 28, 2010)—State Sen. Darrel J. Aubertine today joined his colleagues in passing legislation (S.7988) that will ensure our state's parks and historic sites are fully operational for families across New York State to enjoy this summer and as an attraction for tourists in need of goods and services from our local businesses.

"From the day this was first proposed, I have worked with my colleagues in support of keeping our parks and historic sites open," said Sen. Aubertine. "The Thousand Islands and the Eastern Basin of Lake Ontario depend on these parks and historic sites for tourism. These attractions generate some \$60 million to \$80 million in economic activity in this region alone, so it is just financial common sense to make this \$6 million investment statewide to keep our summer economy moving."

The three-way agreement finalized late on Thursday secures \$6 million to prevent the closure of 57 state parks and historic sites along with reduced operations at another 22 sites. Another \$5 million will go to parks that the governor had proposed moving under the purview of the Environmental Protection Fund, plus another \$5 million will be reallocated for payments to local governments in the forest preserve.

"This is the right thing to do and I'm pleased the governor has come around on this to recognize the error of his proposal," Sen. Aubertine said. "Closing these facilities would have cost the state more in revenue than any savings from scaling back the services. It may be difficult to get everything up and running this weekend, but with this legislation now passed and signed into law, we have the means to restore these parks and historic sites for the remainder of the summer season."

In Oswego, Jefferson and St. Lawrence counties, the three-way agreement puts to rest the governor's proposal to close down the Sackets Harbor Battlefield and Fort Ontario historic sites, along with Eel Weir, Mary Island, Canoe-Picnic Point and Cedar Island, while reducing services at Keewaydin State Park and

Selkirk Shores.