



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

## Safety Review of Popular Greene County Hiking Trail Needed

JAMES L. SEWARD July 29, 2010

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ONEONTA, 07/30/10 – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I-Oneonta) recently called on the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to review safety measures at the Devil’s Kitchen hiking area in the Town of Hunter.

**“Two fatal hiking accidents this year at Devil’s Kitchen have prompted concerns that must be evaluated,”** said Senator Seward. **“The Department of Environmental Conservation should take steps to assess the trail’s safety and to ensure proper warnings are present.”**

Senator Seward recently sent a letter to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation calling for a review of safety measures in place at the Devil’s Kitchen hiking area, and in particular, whether sufficient signage warning of potential dangers is present. Seward also volunteered to join DEC officials for a site visit.

In the letter, Seward states: “Given this year’s two fatalities, I would think it absolutely necessary that the department review the area, safety warnings, trail markers and signs, and evaluate what kinds of safety steps might be taken to mitigate the chance of another fatal accident at the site.”

On May 1st, William Costello of Delmar fell to his death and on June 4th, Olivia Rose Belfiglio, a Saugerties High School junior died when she fell from the steep terrain.

**“Part of the allure of upstate New York is the wonderful scenery and extensive system of hiking trails. We must ensure these trails are as safe as possible and that ample warnings are posted advising hikers of trail difficulty and potential dangers. I am hopeful that the DEC will take the necessary steps to stave off additional tragedies,” Seward concluded.**