



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Bonacic

Bonacic: Don't End Free Skiing for Seniors at Belleayre

JOHN J. BONACIC September 21, 2010

| ISSUE: **RECREATION AND TOURISM**



State Senator John J. Bonacic (R/I/C – Mt. Hope), today asked the DEC not to end free skiing for seniors over the age of 70 at Belleayre Mountain Ski Center. The [Albany Times Union reported today](#) that two of the State's major, publicly owned ski centers – Gore and Whiteface, are no longer offering free skiing to those aged 70 and above.

"I would rather have seniors spending money at local restaurants and hotels, then at the State owned ski center. The lifts are going to run no matter what, so the skiing should continue free for seniors," Bonacic said.

Bonacic added, "skiing is great exercise, even on the wonderfully groomed trails of [Belleayre](#), where skiing is almost effortless. It is in the interest of seniors' health that this opportunity to enjoy some time outdoors is continued."

The Senator also said free senior skiing was a way to keep more families skiing in New York. “When families decide where to go, they price activities as a family. If grandparents can ski for free, that is one more reason why their children and grandchildren will stay and ski in New York, as opposed to going to Vermont,” Bonacic said.

Ward Todd , President of the Ulster County Regional Chamber of Commerce said Bonacic’s position was correct. “Belleayre is an economic engine for our region. We find many seniors ski at Belleayre, and then spend money in the community. We don’t want to see those seniors simply ski at Belleayre, and instead of stopping for dinner, or seeing a show, or spending the night, just leave our region and go home. Anytime the State increases costs on consumers, when those same consumers would otherwise be spending in our local businesses, we have a big problem. We join Senator Bonacic in this effort and appreciate, as always, his constant support of Belleayre Mountain and tourism in the Catskills.”

###