



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Betty Little

Legislature approves first passage of Township 40 constitutional amendment

BETTY LITTLE June 22, 2012

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A proposed state constitutional amendment that would settle a century-old title dispute in the Adirondacks won passage in the State Assembly late Wednesday following Senate passage Tuesday, according to sponsors Senator Betty Little and Assemblywoman Teresa Sayward.

The concurrent resolution will need to be approved again next year by a newly elected state Legislature before it can be placed on the ballot for statewide approval in a general election, likely in November 2013.

“The proposed amendment will settle a very lengthy and controversial dispute between the State of New York and private property owners in Raquette Lake,” said Little. “Doing so avoids costly litigation and benefits the public with improved Adirondack Park recreational access. A lot of work has gone into this, particularly by DEC, numerous environmental organizations and local officials, all to be applauded. Today’s passage is a very encouraging first step.”

Assemblywoman Sayward said, “This amendment will authorize the settlement of a 100 year old competing claims of title between NY State and private parties in Raquette Lake in Hamilton County. The people, the State and the Forest Preserve will benefit from this first passage. Much work went into this Amendment and I commend DEC, the Governor and the Adirondack Environmental groups for their hard work.”

In addition to the resolution passing the Legislature again next year, separate legislation will need to pass the Senate and Assembly to establish the process of resolving claims of title.

Provisions of that legislation would list the more than 200 parcels of land in Township 40 in Raquette Lake in Hamilton County, allow those with disputed titles to opt in or opt out of the settlement process and require a payment from occupants which would be used toward purchase of replacement land of greater benefit to be added to the Adirondack Park.

The replacement land would ensure the overall integrity of the Park is not only diminished but improved and would be subject to State legislative approval.