



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose M. Serrano

Senator Serrano Applauds New York State Parks' High Visitation Marks

JOSÉ M. SERRANO February 28, 2014

| ISSUE: **ARTS AND CULTURE**



Attendance in Parks Exceeds 60 Million for Second Year in a Row

(New York, NY)- Senator Serrano, the Ranking Member of the Senate's Committee on Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks & Recreation, expressed enthusiasm over an announcement by New York State's Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation's (OPRHP) that state park attendance topped 60 million visitors in 2013 for the second year in a row. Senator Serrano has been a staunch supporter of government investment in our state parks to act as an economic engine.

"For the second year in a row New York state parks brought in over 60 million visitors," said Senator Serrano. "Previous initiatives, like the Empire Passport program, are thriving. I am optimistic that our commitment to parks will

continue to bolster tourism with more and more visitors coming each and every year to experience our wonderful park system. The grass is truly greener here in New York State."

In 2012 Governor Cuomo signed into law a bill sponsored by Senator Serrano, Senate Bill S2747A, which expanded the preexisting one-year Empire Passport by allowing OPRHP to offer three-year and five-year Empire Passports beginning in 2013. The Empire Passport, which provides unlimited day-use vehicle entries to State parks and recreational facilities, has no doubt contributed to the amount of visitors to our State's beautiful parks by making them more affordable and easily accessible.