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THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK



ROBERT G. ORTT
SENATOR, 62ND DISTRICT

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February 23, 2017

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
New York State Capital Building
Albany, NY 12227

Dear Governor Cuomo:

After a discussion with your representatives, I am writing on behalf of our mutual constituents in opposition to your proposed lodge on Goat Island in Niagara Falls State Park. I believe a lodge on the island would be damaging to the unique natural landscape of the state park, and would negatively impact the nascent economy of the City of Niagara Falls.

As you know, tourism is a major industry in Niagara Falls. We can take steps to improve this industry by developing the City of Niagara Falls and encouraging visitors to extend their stay beyond the boundaries of the State Park. However, your proposal to construct lodging within the park will give no incentive for visitors to go outside the park. This also will undercut previous investments from New York State and Niagara County to improve the lodging and hotels that are in Niagara Falls. Your proposal further separates the state park and the downtown economy. If a lodge were to be constructed within the state park, the only economic beneficiary would be the state.

The original direction given to Frederick Law Olmsted by the State of New York was to create a peaceful reflection, free from commercial development. We are fortunate enough to have this world wonder in our state, and we should be exploring and considering all options that would help further develop the Niagara Falls region and benefit visitors and residents alike. On behalf of my constituents, I ask that you reconsider constructing a lodge in another location in the city that can spur shared economic development.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to a timely response from your office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert G. Ort". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "R" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Robert G. Ort
State Senator, 62nd District

CC:

Rose Harvey, Commissioner of New York State Parks, Recreation/Historic Preservation
Senator John F. Flanagan, New York State Senate Majority Leader
Assemblyman Angelo J. Morinello, 145th District
Sam Hoyt, Empire State Economic Development Corporation