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## SIGN ON LETTER FOR KEY LEGISLATORS

REGISTER YOUR SUPPORT BY EMAIL [stc@ptny.org](mailto:stc@ptny.org) or  
GIVE US A CALL at 518-434-1583 by MARCH 14

### WE NEED YOU TO ADD YOUR NAME TO THE LETTER

Date

Senator Joseph Bruno  
Temporary President and Majority Leader  
Room 909 Legislative Office Building  
Albany, NY 12247

Assemblyman Sheldon Silver  
Speaker, NYS Assembly  
LOB 932  
Albany, NY 12248

Senator Carl L. Marcellino  
Chairman, Environmental Conservation Committee  
Room 509, Legislative Office Building  
Albany, NY 12247

Assemblyman Robert Sweeney  
Chairman, Environmental Conservation Committee  
LOB 625  
Albany, NY 12248

Senator Owen H. Johnson  
Chairman, Senate Finance Committee  
Room 913 Legislative Office Building  
Albany, NY 12247

Assemblyman Herman Farrell  
Chairperson, Ways and Means Committee  
LOB 923  
Albany, NY 12248

Senator Mary Lou Rath  
Chairman, Senate Standing Committee on Tourism,  
Recreation and Sports Development  
Room 310, Legislative Office Building  
Albany, NY 12247

Assemblyman Steve Englebright  
Chairman, Committee on Tourism, Recreation and  
Sports Development  
LOB 712  
Albany, NY 12248

Dear (a separate letter will be sent to each of the legislators above):

We write to urge you to support the capacity grant program for park and trail not-for-profits within the Environmental Protection Fund and the Community Trails Initiative bill. Both will have a significant impact on the future of trails and the sustainability of trails organizations in New York.

- **Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) - \$500,000 for capacity grants for not-for-profit park and trail organizations within EPF**

Hundreds of volunteer trail organizations are working in partnership with local, regional and state government agencies to develop and maintain New York's trails. While they play a key role in developing, maintaining, and promoting outdoor recreation resources, their efforts are often limited because they do not have sufficient resources or staff to develop the programs that can provide important community benefits.

Based on the proven success of the DEC-Land Trust Alliance grant program, these capacity building grants for not for profit park and trail groups will similarly be able to foster enhanced stewardship of the state's trails and parks through improving the vitality and sustainability of park and trail organizations.

EPF funding has been a critical source of funding for municipal parks, stewardship of state lands, land acquisition, farmland protection, and recycling as well as a number of trail projects. We join with 200 other environmental organizations in requesting that the **EPF be increased to \$275 million** to restore cuts to existing programs and to fund important new initiatives that have been added to the EPF.

And, we also join with the Friends of New York's Environment Coalition in opposing the sweep of \$125 million from the EPF for general fund relief. Because of a concerted effort on the part of this administration to get EPF money disbursed, there is the very real possibility that the sweep will negatively affect the ability to get this important funding to the communities who need it.

- **Community Trails Initiative bill, S02324 Rath/A9317 DelMonte**

New York's communities face significant challenges related to physical inactivity, energy prices, economic vitality and quality of life. Community trails are an important part of the response to these challenges. Research shows that "if you build it, they will come."

In order to advance trail development to the level envisioned in state planning documents, and maximize the various benefits of trails, **New York needs a coordinated strategy to design, establish, manage and promote a comprehensive system of multi-use trails** consisting of a network of primary corridors linked to and enhanced by regional and local multi-use trails that will ensure that New Yorkers are only minutes from a trail or park.

The Community Trails Initiative bill will establish a taskforce to develop a plan for a comprehensive statewide, interconnected system of multi-use trails that will reap significant health, environmental, economic and quality of life benefits for all New Yorkers. Once a vision for a statewide multi-use trail network is created it can inform acquisition and development decisions and funding allocations for trail promotion, development, interpretation, and maintenance. Multiple agencies need to be involved along with input from local governments, regional planning authorities, regional tourism agencies, regional advisory groups representing the interest of local conservationists, outdoor and sports enthusiast groups, federal agencies involved with greenways and heritage corridors.

New York State is fortunate to have more than 1,000 miles of multi-use trails such as rail trails, canal trails, river walks, trails within greenways and other locally developed trails that provide transportation, recreational, health, economic, conservation, and quality of life benefits. With the ever increasing emphasis on the need to be physically active to sustain and improve physical and mental health, more and more people, especially seniors and families, are using and asking for more trails to be built within their communities.

It is our vision that New York will be known as the pre-eminent trail state, attracting residents as well as visitors from across the nation and abroad to experience the historic communities and varied and beautiful landscapes accessible through a statewide trail network.

We're committed to undertake many activities that will expand and promote that vision and hope you'll work with us by supporting the Community Trails Initiative bill S02324 Rath/A9317 DelMonte, and \$275 million for the EPF, including the capacity grants program for park and trail not-for-profits.

Working together, we can expand, protect, and promote the trails and greenways of New York State.

Sincerely,

**PLEASE LET US KNOW IF WE CAN ADD YOUR NAME TO THE LIST**