



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Owen H. Johnson

5-27-10 Senator Owen H. Johnson Comments on the State Budget and State Park Closures

OWEN H. JOHNSON May 27, 2010

Given the nature of the economy, Long Islanders want an affordable vacation and will want to use our State Park facilities for swimming, camping, golfing, picnics, and hiking beginning on the Memorial Day Weekend. I am outraged that our State Budget is 56 days late and that State Parks are being targeted for closure or service reductions.

Last night, my Senate Republican colleagues and I introduced a proposal to restore funding to State Parks by using excess funds relating to the New York Power Authority without the necessity of dipping into the Environmental Protection Fund.

Senate Democrats have talked about the need to reopen our parks, but every single one of them voted against our plan that would have ensured that all New Yorkers have access to fully operational parks as the holiday weekend approaches.

The Democratic leadership in the State Senate has continuously dragged their feet on passing a State Budget that stops irresponsible spending, targets fraud and waste in government, and reduces a bloated bureaucracy.

Simply put, if the Democratic Senate leadership established Budget Conference Committees, as required by law, a Budget would be in place and all of our State Parks would be open and

fully operational.

Let's stop the games and start negotiations immediately! Our families and all New Yorkers are starting to face serious consequences due to this late Budget. In my own district, the contractors performing work for the state are not being paid, school aid payments are late, the grass on our parkways is not being cut, and even the state DOT is rationing gas! This is outrageous! We need to pass a responsible state budget today!

Never in the history of our state, even during the Great Depression, have New York State Parks closed. Let's stop the games and begin negotiating a responsible Budget that includes more than three Democrats from New York City.