



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Dean G. Skelos

Statement by Senate Republican Leader Dean Skelos

DEAN G. SKELOS May 28, 2010



The Governor's proposal to re-open state parks is a classic bait and switch scam that promises open parks and delivers a mess of millions of dollars in new taxes and fees on businesses and reduces environmental protection funds. This disgraceful plan was negotiated in secret, in the middle of the night, by Speaker Silver and Senator Sampson.

The parks issue is a microcosm of the entire state budget process that has left New Yorkers frustrated and angry. The Democrats that control all levels of government should be ashamed that the budget is now 58 days late and there are no signs of any agreement.

The parks issue should have been resolved without last minute, secret negotiations and tax hikes. In fact, the Governor had the power and ability to keep the parks open without additional funds on his own. That is what Senate Democrats claimed when they passed a bill by Senator Serrano, who said there were sufficient funds in the budget extender to keep parks open.

Senate Republicans proposed a simple solution this week that would have kept the parks open without resorting to tax and fee hikes. In the budget extender bill approved this week, the Governor proposed sweeping \$65 million from the New York Power Authority. We offered an amendment to the budget extender that would have used \$6 million from that action to fund parks. Our plan was rejected by Senate Democrats.

It's ironic that, within days after their own gubernatorial candidate made a pledge of no new taxes, the Democrats pass a bill that raises them by millions. Apparently, the "new" New York Democratic party is no different than the old one that never shied away from a tax increase.

The Senate Democrats made a promise that they wouldn't raise taxes this year. They didn't take long to break that promise, just like last year when they raised taxes by \$8.5 billion and

passed a \$1.5 billion payroll tax.

Even more frightening for New Yorkers is the prospect that the Democrats' answer for the parks issue signals what is to come when, or if, a budget agreement is reached – and that is secret negotiations and more tax and fee hikes. That is not going to be a vacation for anyone.

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