



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

Seward, Butler Call Strategy Session To Save Herkimer Home

JAMES L. SEWARD January 24, 2011

| ISSUE: **RECREATION AND TOURISM, STATE PARKS**

ALBANY, 01/24/11 – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I – Oneonta) and Assemblyman Marc Butler (R/C/I – Newport) are working to save Herkimer Home from the state budget chopping block.

“With state park use on a steady rise due to the economic crunch, it makes no sense to shutter Herkimer Home,” stated Senator Seward. **“The cost to operate the historic Herkimer County site is low, but the return is high – local businesses receive an economic bump, and the educational value to visitors is priceless.”**

“The closure of Herkimer Home would be a tremendous blow to the region,” said Assemblyman Butler. “The site means a great deal to Herkimer County’s growing tourism industry and the precious artifacts at the home represent an important link to our past. I fought hard last year to keep the historic landmark open and am gearing up for another battle in 2011.”

Senator Seward and Assemblyman Butler convened a meeting today with state Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Acting Commissioner Andy Beers, Friends of Herkimer Home President Barbara Mielcarski and Secretary Barbara Voelke and Herkimer County Chamber of Commerce Executive Director John Scarano to discuss future plans for

Herkimer Home.

While Commissioner Beers indicated the historic site is slated for closure due to budgetary constraints, he did indicate a willingness to work with local officials on an agreement that would allow for continued use.

“Other park sites around the state are entering into public-private partnerships to survive, and it is clear there is substantial interest in developing a similar agreement in this case,” Assemblyman Butler added.

“New York is in dire financial straits, and we need to streamline wherever possible. However, I am confident that by aligning with local groups like Friends of Herkimer Home, the Herkimer County Chamber and others, we can develop creative alternatives that will keep the landmark open for generations to come,” Seward concluded.

Both Seward and Butler pointed out that Herkimer Home has an active “friends” group that can play a major role in plans to keep Herkimer Home open.