



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Dean G. Skelos

## Senate Passes “Adopt-a-Park” Program

DEAN G. SKELOS May 16, 2011

*Bill Would Facilitate Volunteer-Driven Park Improvement Projects and Beautification*

The New York State Senate today passed the “Adopt-a-Park” bill, which allows the state and municipalities to work together to develop agreements with volunteers to beautify parklands. Bill S.2686A, sponsored by Senator Mark Grisanti (R, North Buffalo), would assist local governments in continuing to provide communities with safe and enjoyable public spaces by allowing volunteer groups to provide services to enhance and maintain parks.

“The Adopt-a-Park program has many benefits, including assisting local governments with the costs of maintaining public facilities and helping build community spirit,” Senator Grisanti said. “Our parks will certainly be better for it, as residents, community organizations and businesses work with municipalities to further improve these important natural spaces.”

“Local parks are treasured sources of community pride and offer a diverse array of services and benefits to residents,” Senate Majority Leader Dean G. Skelos said. “Our state is facing a fiscal crisis which impacts the budgets of municipalities, as well as families. The Adopt-a-Park program is a great way to address some budget concerns by continuing to provide park amenities in a cost-effective way, so that the community can continue to enjoy these cherished assets.”

Modeled after the successful “Adopt-a-Highway” program, Adopt-a-Park gives local governments the ability to fully avail themselves of assistance offered by volunteer groups. At a time when many municipalities are coping with limited budgets and strained resources, Adopt-a-Park would enable municipalities to establish volunteer agreements to make park improvements including vandalism remediation, litter removal, developing and maintaining nature trails, planting and maintaining flowerbeds, establishing and maintaining dog runs. The bill authorizes the state Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to provide the necessary technical advice and guidance to municipalities seeking to establish such agreements.

The bill has been sent to the Assembly.