



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mark Grisanti

## Statement: From Wallenda and WNY Legislators in Response to Bill Signing

MARK GRISANTI September 23, 2011

| ISSUE: **RECREATION AND TOURISM**

*Wallenda says this will be a dream come true*

Governor Andrew Cuomo has signed into law legislation (A.8206-a/S.4844-a) that would allow Nik Wallenda to perform a high wire walk between the United States and Canada over Niagara Falls. The measure was approved by the State Legislature in June 2011 and, according to the law, Wallenda will have one year from today to perform the walk. The remaining hurdle is for Wallenda to obtain approvals from Canadian officials.

Nik Wallenda said, "Having your dreams come true is an amazing feeling, I literally had tears in my eyes when I first heard the news. I'd like to express my greatest thanks to Senator George Maziarz, Senator Mark Grisanti, Assemblyman John Ceretto, and Assemblyman Dennis Gabryszak for their belief in me and allowing me to fulfill my dream and of course enormous thanks to Governor Cuomo as well. You'll be seeing a lot of me in Niagara Falls over the next year and beyond."

Senator George Maziarz (R-C, Newfane), sponsor of the legislation in the Senate, said, "I commend Governor Cuomo for recognizing how Nik Wallenda's high wire walk will be able to put Niagara Falls in the international spotlight in a new and positive way. Over the past

few months we have worked hard to make sure that the any questions or concerns from the governor's office or State Parks were addressed. Nik Wallenda and his team traveled here many times to make the case for this undertaking and explain what it would entail. In so doing, he earned the support of many local and state officials. The Governor's approval is an indication that this walk can happen and should happen. This was a big piece of the puzzle, and now we keep to keep the momentum going and convince the Canadians."

Senator Mark Grisanti (R, Niagara Falls/Buffalo), a representative of the City of Niagara Falls, said, "Nik Wallenda is an incredibly talented individual who is at the absolute top of his field. We should welcome him with open arms in Niagara Falls and allow him to put on a great show. The whole world will be watching—what better way to draw positive attention to Niagara Falls. The Governor's support is now going to help make that happen, and I salute him for realizing how important this event is to our delegation."

Assemblyman John Ceretto (R, Lewiston), who also represents Niagara Falls, said, "I spoke with Nik Wallenda this afternoon and he is extremely excited to be coming to Niagara Falls. This event will bring global attention to Niagara Falls and will provide a needed boost to the region's tourism industry. This is exactly the type of game changing event we needed to help rebuild the American side of Niagara Falls and make it a premier tourism destination and a region of economic growth. I am so proud to be a sponsor of this bill and cannot wait to welcome Nik Wallenda to my hometown."

Assemblyman Dennis Gabryszak (D, Cheektowaga), sponsor of the legislation in the Assembly, said, "It has been an honor and privilege to work with my colleagues, in a bipartisan fashion, to achieve something great. The Governor recognizes that Nik Wallenda is a professional, and that this historic event will be world-class. This is something all of Western New York can unite behind, and our efforts will continue over the next year to try to bring this to fruition."