



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

## Senator Squadron Testimony on City Parks Budget

DANIEL L. SQUADRON March 27, 2014

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### **Senator Pushes Neighborhood Conservancies to “Change The Game” on Parks Funding**

NEW YORK CITY – Today, Senator Daniel Squadron submitted testimony on the City’s Parks budget at the New York City Council’s Fiscal Year 2015 Preliminary Budget hearing. Senator Squadron argued that his proposal to connect well-financed conservancies and parks most in need -- called the Neighborhood Parks Alliance -- would be a “game changer” for the Parks budget overall.

“The fact that we are having an active discussion about the role of conservancies means we are making progress, but this conversation must actually lead to two things that will fundamentally change the game for parks all across the city: a greater connection between all the parks in the system and more funding. This is a goal we all share”, said State Senator Daniel Squadron. “Today’s patchwork model for funding our city’s parks, which are as vital to our civic infrastructure as oxygen is to our lungs, is wholly and completely inadequate for three reasons: underfunding by the City; lack of a dedicated capital budget; and the unintended consequences of conservancies.”

Under Squadron's proposal, conservancies would join the proposed Neighborhood Parks Alliance as “contributing parks” to create more equity across the city’s parks. A contributing

park would commit 20 percent of its conservancy's budget to member parks in need. Parks in need would become members by gathering signatures from local residents, establishing their own conservancy group, and receiving commitments from the Parks Department and local Council members to at least maintain current government funding levels.

Disparities between well-funded, well-maintained parks (which are often heavily financed by private donations), and parks in lower-income neighborhoods, have continued to grow in recent years.

Senator Squadron's testimony can be found below.

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