



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel G. Stec

## Stec: Governor's Statement on Adirondack Parks and Gun Control Bill Don't Match Legislative Intent

DANIEL G. STEC July 7, 2022

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In the wake of recent concerns expressed by Senator Dan Stec (R,C-Queensbury) and an outpouring of public outcry, Governor Hochul's office issued a statement on how its new gun control laws would impact the Adirondack Park.

A spokesperson for the governor stated, "The new law, which goes into effect September 1 and also includes exemptions for hunting and hunter education programs, changes nothing for lawful gun owners on both Forest Preserve and private lands within the blue line of the Adirondacks and Catskills. These areas are not considered 'sensitive locations' under the law."

As Senator Stec points out, this message only adds further confusion and runs counter to both the bill language and the intent expressed by Legislative leaders during last week's Extraordinary Session.

"The law reads clearly that it will be a felony to possess a firearm, rifle or shotgun in sensitive areas - including parks. What this means for the Adirondacks was discussed by the Legislature during debate of the bill July 1st and their legislative intent was made explicitly clear by the Senate and Assembly sponsors," said Stec. "This disagreement between the legislative sponsors' words and the Governor's office's attempt to walk this back is exactly the kind of confusion created when legislation is rushed through solely as a knee-jerk reaction to the Supreme Court decision."

During floor debate on the gun control bill, the Senate Democrat sponsor of the legislation was asked how this impacted the Adirondack Park. In his answer, he noted that any "parts of the Adirondack Park that are public would fall under the sensitive location criteria laid out here."

"Answers like this are why the Assemblymembers and Senators representing the region, from both parties, voted against this bill and in subsequent statements cited the impact it would have on the Adirondack Park as the primary reason why," Stec noted.

"Follow-up conversations my office had with members of Governor Hochul's staff and the DEC confirmed they weren't clear on what this meant for the Adirondack Park and expressed both concern and a desire to address this vagueness," he continued.

"If Governor Hochul's spokesperson doesn't agree with the way the law reads, the stated intent of the bill sponsors or with other members of the Executive Chamber, then there needs to be a serious discussion and

movement to amend it, lest law-abiding Adirondackers be made into felons,” Stec concluded.