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Legislative Commission on Rural Resources

August 5, 2013

Rose Harvey, Commissioner
NYS Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12207

Re: Sampson State Park marina

Dear Commissioner Harvey:

Thank you for meeting with me, in addition to your follow-up letter detailing the plan for a feasibility study regarding the Sampson State Park marina. I appreciate you for seeking our thoughts and input on this issue.

There is one very important point which I hope you will take into account during the feasibility study and for future investment – that is the undeniable fact of the positive economic impact the park and marina have on the region. The marina is located right at the center of Seneca Lake, the largest of the Finger Lakes. There is no other site between the north (Geneva) and south (Watkins Glen) shores which provides the type of services to park patrons and boaters.

I believe that as you study the return on investment dollars, the department should not ignore the opportunity to upgrade the Sampson Park marina, particularly its potential as a fueling station at the marina and other amenities boaters routinely seek. Sampson State Park draws the highest campground patronage numbers of all the Finger Lakes parks. Those numbers translate into an estimated \$2-\$4 million in revenues to local businesses. Upgrading Sampson's facilities would be an incredible boon to the park and undoubtedly boost tourism overall along the lake. The fueling station also would help law enforcement's navigation patrol as well.

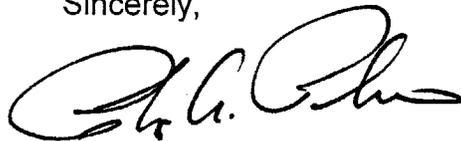
It is important to take into consideration the overall economic impact these potential improvements could make on the region and to previous independent studies bear out this reasoning. Tourism in the Finger Lakes continues to grow rapidly and the marina investment could further serve and support this effort. The governor and legislature have made an unprecedented commitment to improving and upgrading infrastructure in our state's parks. I strongly believe, given the attributes of this marina

and other area attractions, Sampson State Park could become an economic resource to the state and pay future dividends on the investment made to improve it.

In addition, Governor Cuomo has promoted the New York State canal system as a unique tourism opportunity and has committed funding to enhance docking facilities along the canal. Sampson State Park is one of the few state park facilities which provides services to canal travelers. Consequently, neglecting to upgrade Sampson's marina would be inconsistent with the state efforts to promote this unique asset.

I strongly suggest that as you conduct this feasibility study the department should look seriously into the potential and tremendous economic opportunity this park improvement would have on tourism and safety in the region and state. After reviewing the marina proposal and visiting the site, I am 100 percent behind investing in this facility. The state should make the necessary improvements to the marina and park which, in turn, will boost tourism and economic opportunities in the Finger Lakes region. I welcome further discussion about this project and hope you will keep me informed about developments in Sampson State Park.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. A. Palmesano". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "A".

Philip A. Palmesano
Member of Assembly