

Endorsing The Private/Public Partnership Whose Goal Is The Building Of The Maurice D. Hinchey Catskill Interpretive Center At The New York State Department Of Environmental Conservation Day Use Area On Route 28 In The Hamlet Of Mount Tremper, Town Of Shandaken, New York

Referred to: The Economic Development and Tourism Committee (Chairman Maloney and Legislators Loughran, Maio, Roberts, and Wishnick)

Legislators Donald J. Gregorius and John R. Parete offer the following:

WHEREAS, over twenty years ago, the New York State Legislature set aside funding for the planning and construction of a Catskill Interpretive Center in Shandaken in order to attract visitors to the area, to provide information regarding the history and ecology of the Catskill Forest Preserve and Catskill Park, and to spur tourism and foster economic revival in the Central Catskills; and

WHEREAS, a 62-acre parcel of land has been acquired by the Catskill Center for Conservation and Development and the Trust for Public Land and leased to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC); and

WHEREAS, initial site preparation with roads, a bridge, two loop trails, and multiple parking areas has been completed, representing an investment of approximately \$1.5 million; and

WHEREAS, the site is currently being managed as a NYSDEC Day Use Area in close proximity to the Esopus Creek and NYS Wilderness and Wild Forest Areas, and The Friends of The Catskill Interpretive Center recently led a private/public partnership that built on that site a Kiosk with information about the Catskill Park and Forest Preserve; and

WHEREAS, the Towns of Shandaken, Olive and Woodstock and numerous planning bodies have long supported the notion of an Interpretive Center at the NYSDEC Day Use Area in Mount Tremper; and

WHEREAS, Ulster County passed Resolution No. 35 January 3, 2007 in support of the construction of the Catskill Interpretive Center; and

WHEREAS, the Catskill Park and Forest Preserve are valuable assets for the people of the State of New York providing outdoor recreational opportunities, preserving wilderness, and benefiting water quality, air quality, wildlife habitat, and a sustainable environment; and

Resolution No. 193 July 23, 2013

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WHEREAS, the Catskill Forest Preserve and the Catskill Park contribute to the nature-based tourism economy, as well as benefiting the scenery and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the Friends of the Catskill Interpretive Center are leading a private/public partnership with the State of New York, local governments, local universities, private organizations and individuals to build The Maurice D. Hinchey Catskill Interpretive Center at the designated Day Use Area as a gateway to the Catskill Park and the Catskill region to be:

- the focus for information about the Catskill Park, the Forest Preserve, the Catskill Region, and recreational opportunities therein;
- a learning center about the Catskill Region;
- a center of information, for visitors and residents, about museums, businesses, amenities, and facilities throughout the Catskill Region;
- a center for the stimulation of tourism to the Catskill Park and Catskill Region; while preserving the natural beauty and wilderness character of the surrounding area; and

WHEREAS, The Maurice D. Hinchey Catskill Interpretive Center promises direct, tangible benefits to Ulster County in the form of increased tourist visitors, spending and employment; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Legislature go on record as supporting the effort to realize the construction of The Maurice D. Hinchey Catskill Interpretive Center at the NYSDEC Day Use Area, while preserving the natural beauty and wilderness character of the surrounding area; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Ulster County Legislature shall forward copies of this resolution to Governor Andrew Cuomo, Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos, Senate Minority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, Assembly Majority Leader Ron Canestrari, Assembly Minority Leader Brian Kolb, New York State Senator James Seward, New York State Assemblyman Kevin A. Cahill, Ulster County Executive Mike Hein, the New York State Association of Counties, and the Friends of the Catskill Interpretive Center,

and moves its adoption.

