



PRESS RELEASE

June 29, 2017

## PROTECT Applauds Passage of new Article XIV Constitutional Amendment and Enabling Legislation

***New “Health and Safety Land Accounts” amendment will be on ballot in November 2017; enabling legislation sets out process for how this complicated amendment will be administered.***

### **For more information:**

Peter Bauer, Executive Director: Office 518.685.3088, Cell 518.796.0112

Lake George, NY – Protect the Adirondacks applauds passage last night by the State Assembly of “2<sup>nd</sup> passage” of the proposed “Health and Safety Land Accounts” amendment to Article XIV, Section 1 of the NYS Constitution. The Assembly also passed, as part of an omnibus bill, the enabling legislation that sets out how this complicated amendment will be administered. As part of a slew of session ending agreements, the State Senate will pass the enabling legislation in its session today.

This proposed amendment authorizes location of broadband, other utilities and bike paths along state highway corridors traversing the Forest Preserve, authorizes location of broadband and other utilities in county, town and village road corridors that traverse the Forest Preserve, and authorizes the creation of a 250-acre “health and safety land account” for the Adirondack and Catskill Parks principally for maintenance and management of local roads and for location of utilities. The “health and safety land account” can also be used for the location and construction of municipal water wells.

This new legislation meets the critical needs identified by Adirondack local governments for greater flexibility in management and maintenance of local highways and bridges, utilizing state and local highways for broadband, other utilities and bike paths. This new amendment also creates a new health and safety land account that provides Forest Preserve lands for approved uses for various highway maintenance projects and the construction of wells for public water supplies.

“Protect the Adirondacks salutes the strong work of Steven Englebright, the

Protect the Adirondacks!  
PO Box 769 Lake George NY 12845 (518) 685-3088  
info@protectadks.org www.protectadks.org  
Like Us on Facebook Follow Us on Twitter @ProtectAdkPark

Chairman of the Assembly Environmental Conservation Committee. He provided principled leadership to uphold the forever wild clause while working to meet the needs of the rural communities of the Catskill and Adirondack Parks. We also commend the work of Assembly Members Billy Jones from northern Franklin County and Dan Stec from Warren County for helping to get these bills through the State Assembly. Senator Little played a key role on moving this legislation through the State Senate,” said Peter Bauer, executive director of Protect the Adirondacks.

“The new amendment will help to continue to build and develop communities throughout the Adirondacks. Extending broadband fiber cable to remote communities of the Adirondacks will help to expand educational and economic development opportunities. This amendment also makes it easier for local roads maintenance projects where roads are bordered by the Forest Preserve, siting of municipal water wells, and for building a network of bike paths between Adirondack communities,” said Peter Bauer.

The “enabling legislation” for this amendment sets out a process for how projects can be undertaken and reviewed by the Department of Environmental Conservation. It’s important to the basic functioning and management of the Forest Preserve that enabling legislation be passed at the same time as 2<sup>nd</sup> passage of the amendment. Some larger projects will require legislative review after the DEC review in a process similar to a municipal parklands alienation process.

### **Protect the Adirondacks**

Protect the Adirondacks, Inc. (PROTECT) is a privately funded, IRS-approved not-for-profit organization dedicated to the protection of the 6-million-acre Adirondack Park in northern New York. PROTECT was formed through the merger of the Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks and the Residents’ Committee to Protect the Adirondacks in 2009. PROTECT pursues its mission to protect the Adirondack Park and defend the public “forever wild” Forest Preserve through citizen advocacy, grassroots organizing, education, research, and legal action. PROTECT is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. PROTECT maintains an office in Lake George. For more information see [www.protectadks.org](http://www.protectadks.org).

##