



Memorandum of Support

A.8300A AN ACT to amend the environmental conservation law and the state finance law, in relation to the forest preserve health and safety land account and public utility improvements.

The bill is designed to implement a new amendment to Article XIV, Section 1, the “forever wild” provision of the state constitution. 2nd passage of this draft amendment is before the State Legislature this session. This is a complicated amendment that creates a “Public Health and Safety Land Account” for local roads maintenance on roads bordered by the Forest Preserve and to enable public utility upgrades and improvements along local and state highways bordered by the Forest Preserve. This amendment would allow removal and replacement of 250 acres of Forest Preserve.

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.

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 2nd passage of the amendment.

For all of these reasons, Protect the Adirondacks strongly supports A8300A.

For more information:

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