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Mayor Fulop Responds to State of NJ's Proposal to Commercially Develop Liberty State Park

State Proposal Calls for Everything from a Conference Center to a Hotel on One of the Last Areas of Open, Green Space on the Lower Hudson

JERSEY CITY – Mayor Fulop responded today to the [18-page proposal](#) released by the Christie Administration on the commercial development of Liberty State Park located in Jersey City.

“The first page of the Christie Administration’s proposal essentially asks, “*How can this park be turned into something that makes more money for the state,*” said **Mayor Fulop**. “That’s a recipe for destroying not just this park, but any park.”

Added **Fulop**, “Jersey City, Hudson County, and New Jersey as a whole are among the most densely populated areas in the country. We should value and protect our park space more than anyone. An attack on Liberty State Park like this is really an attack on the quality of life for all residents.

“We intend on fighting back aggressively to protect this jewel of a park for Jersey City,” Fulop said.

Liberty State Park, which spans 1,600 acres on the bank of the Hudson River, and sits directly behind the Statue of Liberty, draws roughly 4 million visitors a year. Founded 39 years ago, it is one of the last open, public spaces on the lower Hudson River coastline with prime views of New York City.

The Christie Administration’s proposal – which is just the latest in a series of efforts to commercialize the park – recommends drastic development of the park, including a low-rise hotel, a conference center, an indoor sports facility, and a second marina. The goal would be for the park to pay for itself – to, according to the plan, generate “enough new revenue to make the park self-sustaining.”

Said Mayor Fulop, “Parks are a public amenity and decisions around keeping precious open space should not be based on dollars, but should be based on the quality of life. The criteria laid out by the state of New Jersey do not apply to any other park in New Jersey, and we believe Liberty State Park should not have different standards. We are going to fight this aggressively.”

“Parks are public goods,” he added, “Studies show that the closer people live to parks, the happier they are and the more they love their neighborhood. Not to mention, Liberty State Park is a big reason that developers, entrepreneurs, and home seekers choose to build and live in Jersey City.”

The Fulop Administration has [come out in favor](#) of a policy of the park “making green and staying green at the same time.” This includes supporting events like this month’s Tough Mudder that brought 8,000 visitors to the park without changing the fundamental nature of the space. It also encompasses more public programming and some renovations, some of which are included in the Christie Administration proposal.

“These commercialization plans are exactly what the overwhelming majority of New Jerseyans have strongly opposed since the park opened 39 years ago,” said Sam Pesin, President of the Friends of Liberty State Park, a non-profit aimed at conserving the space. “The broad public consensus has always been for a free open space park behind Lady Liberty.”

Beyond a general mention of a “stakeholder process,” the Christie Administration has released no specific information yet about what – if any – say the community will have in this decision.

All media inquiries should be directed to Ryan Jacobs, Communications Director to Mayor Steven M. Fulop at rjacobs@cnj.org or 201-637-7360. ///