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## **“Stop Fooling with our State Historic Sites and Parks”**

ALBANY, NY – April 1, 2010 – The Preservation League of New York State sent a letter signed by two dozen advocates from across the state, urging the Governor and Legislative leaders to fully fund the NYS Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP), and to give state historic sites and parks the support they deserve.

“In February, some 55 State Parks and Historic Sites were threatened with closure, and last month, the Senate and Assembly responded to public outcry and proposed full restoration of funding to OPRHP,” said Jay DiLorenzo, President of the Preservation League. “Now, on April 1, there is no enacted State Budget, and our parks and historic sites remain in limbo. Closure impacts began today: bathrooms are locked, maintenance has been halted, and residents and visitors are not able to make reservations for campgrounds or picnic shelters, nor plan vacations to experience the authentic buildings and artifacts that tell the stories of our state and nation’s history. It’s time to stop fooling with our State Historic Sites and Parks, so the heritage and natural beauty of the Empire State may continue to educate and inspire this nation’s citizens and visitors from across the globe.”

In the letter, the League noted that powerful economic benefits flow to places that stress historic preservation. According to the 2009 national research study on U.S. Cultural and Heritage Travel by Mandela Research, 78% of all U.S. leisure travelers participate in cultural and/or heritage activities while traveling, translating to 118.3 million adults each year. Cultural and heritage visitors spend, on average, \$994 per trip compared to \$611 for all U.S. travelers. Perhaps the biggest benefits of cultural heritage tourism are diversification of local economies and preservation of a community’s unique character.

For more information on the Preservation League of New York State, please call 518-462-5658 or visit the League’s website at [www.preservenys.org](http://www.preservenys.org).