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**Memorandum of Support
A.7044 (Buttenschon)/S.5958 (May)**

The Preservation League of New York State is New York's statewide historic preservation nonprofit. We write in support of Bills A.7044/S.5958 relating to the operations and preservation of the National Historic Landmark New York State Canal System.

As New York State's only statewide historic preservation nonprofit organization, the Preservation League invests in people and projects that champion the essential role of preservation in community revitalization, sustainable economic growth and the protection of our historic buildings and landscapes. We lead advocacy, economic development and education programs across the state and partner with local preservation organizations throughout New York. In 2019, we listed the NYS Canal System as a statewide *Seven to Save* to highlight the need for New York State to prioritize stewardship of its National Historic Landmark canals as an intact, fully-navigable international waterway for present and future generations

The New York State Canal System was designated a National Historic Landmark in 2016 due to its span, scope, authenticity and historic integrity. The Preservation League believes that the best future for our NYS Canal System lies in capitalizing on its past, marketing itself as a historic transportation corridor, improving amenities for canal users, and strengthening local, regional, and international partnerships to promote tourism, as well as recreational and commercial use.

We commend the New York Power Authority and New York State Canal Corporation for their ongoing restoration, maintenance, and stewardship of our National Historic Landmark canal system. This bill supports their work while providing important consistency for those who use the canal, whether for recreation, tourism, or commercial purposes.

We support the bill's goal to establish a consistent operating schedule that provides users the opportunity to navigate through the autumn tourism season, as well as reinforcing the ability of commercial boat operators to use canal facilities as prescribed under New York State's Codes, Rules and Regulations, and continued use of the canal system's National Historic Landmark locks, moveable dams, and other engineering structures.

Our impressive New York State Canal System has national and global significance thanks to its authenticity as a continuously operating end-to-end canal system. The vibrancy of our canals brings billions of dollars each year to our state and communities along the canal corridor.

As we celebrate the canal's 200th birthday, this legislation will support and enhance the canal system's ability to leverage the economic benefits of tourism, recreation, and commercial use now and into the future.