

December 10, 2007

Dear Senator Pappageorge:

The Citizen's Committee for Michigan State Parks recently passed the attached resolution (11-2007-01) which provides a long-term funding solution for our state parks and forest recreation. I hope you would consider supporting it.

As you probably know, our state parks are heading towards a crisis due to the elimination of general fund support in 2004 and the resulting structural deficits. Unlike nearly all other states, our parks have had to rely primarily on campground fees and motor vehicle passes.

The result is our Parks Improvement Fund balance has been drained in Fiscal Year 2009. To avoid deficit spending, State Parks may have to close as soon as April 2008. And while no specific park closures have been announced, it is likely that those in Southeast Michigan will be among the first chosen since they do not have the premier money-generating campgrounds as do those along the Great Lakes.

And similarly, recent general fund cuts to State Forest Recreation have caused the closing of campgrounds and the elimination of state forest trails. Last summer's general fund cut jumped from \$75K to \$423K.

Both of these issues are addressed in the funding proposal, while also making park access more affordable, eliminating DNR administration costs, and maintaining Michigan's outdoor quality of life.

This proposal is not new. The Committee has been reviewing funding options for a couple years. They've looked at what other states have done successfully. The recommended proposal is based on one that's used in Montana. I think this is the best choice for Michigan.

If you have any questions or comments, just contact me. There is additional information on-line at [www.m-bike.org/dnr](http://www.m-bike.org/dnr).

Sincerely,

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