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November 17, 2003

VIA REGULAR MAIL

Mr. James Hall
Superintendent
Palisades Interstate Park Commission
P.O. Box 155
Alpine, NJ 07620

Mr. Joseph Seymour
Executive Director
The Port Authority of New York and
New Jersey
225 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10003

RE: George Washington Bridge-Palisades Interstate Park Bicycle/Pedestrian Path

Dear Mr. Hall and Mr. Seymour:

At the confluence of the world's busiest bridge, New Jersey's most heavily-traveled bicycle corridor and a popular walking location for commuting and recreation, lies a traffic beast that can be tamed.

Building a 1/2 mile multi-use path between the George Washington Bridge and the Henry Hudson Drive entrance to the Palisades Interstate Park along the east side of Hudson Terrace and Main Street in Fort Lee will solve traffic, congestion, safety and recreation deficiencies. It is an excellent example of Smart Growth.

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and the Palisades Interstate Park must work together to dedicate their strip of property, fund and build this priority project.

The most heavily traveled bicycle location in New Jersey is just off the George Washington Bridge bicycle-pedestrian path on Hudson Terrace in Fort Lee where as many as 1,000 bicyclists ride each day for commuting and recreation. It is also a dangerous place for pedestrians where congestion, narrow roads, hills, no dedicated bicycle facilities and limited access to sidewalks result in many conflicts with motorists.

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The bicycle/hiking friendly Palisades Interstate Park is less than half a mile from the George Washington Bridge but almost impossible to get to safely and legally. The land in between is owned by the Palisades Interstate Park and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

The George Washington Bridge is the only bicycle/pedestrian access between New Jersey and Manhattan and will link the Palisades Interstate Park to the Hudson River Greenway, the country's busiest multi-use trail, located on the West Side of Manhattan.

Now is the time to approve, finance and build the path connecting the George Washington Bridge to the Palisades Interstate Park. The Port Authority's construction of a major new bridge entrance ramp in 2004, which will impact the park, is the perfect time to construct the path. This path can serve as New Jersey's northern segment of the East Coast Greenway, which is inching its way from Middlesex County to the Hudson River waterfront (on its way to linking Pennsylvania to New York through New Jersey and ultimately connecting communities from Florida to Maine). It also finishes the Hudson River Walkway, opening up riverfront access along Hudson and Bergen counties between the Bayonne and George Washington Bridges.

If you would like to discuss the matter further, please do not hesitate to contact my office at 201-261-8228.

Very truly yours,



Matt Ahearn

Assemblyman, District 38

cc: Hon. James McGreevey, Governor
Hon. Jack Lettiere, Commissioner
New Jersey Department of Transportation

MA/nf