



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: April 8, 2009

Contact: Martha Cooper

mcooper@fohrp.org

212-757-0981x207

NEW YORK STATE ALLOCATES \$6 MILLION TO HUDSON RIVER PARK Projects Under Construction Can Continue As Planned

Friends of Hudson River Park welcomes the action of the state legislature, reflected in the budget bill signed by Governor Paterson yesterday, that allocated \$6 million towards the ongoing construction of Hudson River Park. In its ten-year history, Friends of Hudson River Park has played a significant role in securing over \$200 million above the original financing set forth in the Hudson River Park Act of 1998. Friends was also a leader in shaping the legislative dialogue this year about State funding for Hudson River Park in order to complete construction projects already underway. As a result of our efforts, the 2010 state budget beginning April 1 includes \$6 million to continue funding of these projects--\$1 million more than originally proposed last December. This allocation, to be matched by New York City for a total of \$12 million, will create or maintain 300 construction jobs over the next eighteen months and ensure that the Chelsea and Tribeca segments of the Park will open next year as planned.

Friends' advocacy process was an arduous one, beginning with the support for the Hudson River Park Trust's initial request to the State for \$16 million to complete existing construction and to initiate new projects throughout the Park. In December 2008, Governor Paterson's Executive Budget proposed funding for Hudson River Park at \$5 million – a significant decrease from the previous year's \$21 million and less than a third of what was requested.

“Acknowledging that the current economic crisis has put unprecedented demands on not only the City and State budgets, but also on its resources for the public, we focused our attention on keeping the current projects moving and maintaining important construction jobs so that additional sections of the Park can be ready as soon as possible,” said Executive Director A. J. Pietrantone. “We are pleased that the \$6 million allocation represents an increase over what was originally proposed.”

When completed, these new sections will greatly enhance the Park by providing significantly more opportunities for leisure and recreation. The area in Tribeca from Chambers to Laight Streets and encompassing two renovated piers will include a miniature golf course, beach volleyball courts, a children's playground, town dock and moorings, locations for historic boats, a flexible artificial lawn and a boathouse for non-motorized vessels. In Chelsea, just north of the Chelsea Piers sports complex, the new area will feature a 7-acre “lawn bowl” that will be home to a skate park, a carousel, and a flower garden and will link

to the renovated Pier 64 at 24th Street that is scheduled to open later this month. Built on a rising elevation with unprecedented views, this pier connects other completed areas to 29th Street.

Friends' efforts were supported in great measure by State Senators Thomas K. Duane and Daniel L. Squadron, who championed the increase of funding in the Senate, and by Hudson River Park's state representatives in the Assembly, Deborah J. Glick, Richard N. Gottfried, and Linda B. Rosenthal, who made the case to Speaker Sheldon Silver.

Once these sections are brought on line, the Park will be nearly 80% complete. The Hudson River Park Trust, the joint city-state agency that builds and maintains the Park, estimates the remaining cost as somewhere between \$160 million to \$200 million.

###

Friends of Hudson River Park, a not-for-profit 501(c) (3) organization, is the only community-based organization dedicated exclusively to the entire Hudson River Park. Celebrating its tenth anniversary in 2009, Friends represents thousands of organizations and individuals who share its mission of creating and preserving this world-class park for everyone.