

**This is the statement from Robert Geddes, partner in the firm of Geddes Brecher Qualls Cunningham Architects and Planners, and Dean Emeritus of the School of Architecture and Urban Planning at Princeton University. Mr. Geddes led the design team that created the original master plan for Liberty State Park. The statement was read at the June assembly hearing on Fireman's LSP bill.**

In the middle 1970s, under the leadership of Governor Brendan Byrne and Commissioner of Environmental Protection David Bardin, New Jersey, plus the advocacy of Audrey Zapp and Morris Pesin. The state engaged me and my firm, GBQC Architects and Planners, to create a master plan for Liberty State Park.

In the words of the late Ada Louise Huxtable, architecture critic for the New York Times: "Liberty Park is a new kind of park, which strives not only for pastoral beauty and waterfront pleasures, but for a balance of environmental, ecological, recreational and cultural concerns." "The plan is vast and visionary ... rational and organized ... Liberty State Park could be the most dramatic open space in the metropolitan region in the next century."

I fully support the Liberty State Park Protection Act. This act respects the original master plan, promotes rational and organized development, and protects the park for future generations. The act describes the park as a natural, historic, recreational, scenic, and cultural resource and allows for small-scale commercial activities such as bike rentals ... all in appropriate locations within the park

However, I completely oppose the S-2807. This act threatens the master plan, and would put an end to Liberty State Park as we know it. In a word, the park envisaged by the supporters of this act is chaotic.

- In place of grassy lawns and athletic fields, this legislation would open the park to large-scale commercial ventures, and private golf courses.
- The stadium and the amphitheater would require paved parking, taking away from park green space.
- Furthermore, the aggressive commercial development would also bring large amounts of automobile traffic onto narrow neighborhood streets ... creating traffic jams that would block access to the park by the general public.

The original master plan is organized, rational, and establishes a framework for future development. The anchor for the park is an arc-shaped seawall facing the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, and the Manhattan skyline. Behind the seawall is the core of the park, a large Greenpark designed in the naturalist tradition of America's great pastoral landscape parks such as Central Park in Manhattan and Prospect Park in Brooklyn.

All future development of the interior section of the park should derive from the backbone of the park – the seawall and the Greenpark. The proposed plan is chaotic and incompatible with the master plan.

Finally, New Jersey's action was a truly entrepreneurial investment for the public good. After all, who would have risked money on a scrap heap and toxic waste site? Today, New Jersey has a world-class park ... and billionaires such as Paul Fireman are trying to appropriate the assets created by public investment for private purposes.

To conclude, I completely support the Liberty State Park Protection Act. I oppose S2807