

REFUTING LIES and SMEAR Attacks by Paul Fireman's surrogates against the LSP Protection Act & Friends of LSP – Facts below from FOLSP

The purpose of the essential LSP Protection Act is to once and for all end decades of privatization threats. The Act will protect the entire sacred and priceless urban state park behind Lady Liberty for FREE passive recreation, unstructured active recreation, the planned active recreation facilities, its playgrounds, enjoyment of urban open space and nature, and free & admission-fee festivals and cultural events. With 5 million annual visitors reflecting Jersey City's and NJ's diversity, LSP is the People's Park, our "free and green urban backyard" and "America's Park". The Act allows for small-scale commercial activities.

Retired Senator Weinberg's **Star Ledger** editorial quote 12/12/21 is **“In what world should the interest of one billionaire outweigh the public interest?” asks Sen. Loretta Weinberg**, a longtime LSP champion. “This bill is unique, in that there is no logical reason to oppose it” and its 8/25/21 editorial headline was **"Keep Billionaire's Vanity Project Out of Our Park"**.

Paul Fireman's surrogates' LIES & SMEAR campaign about the LSP Protection Act are below. Their BIG LIE STRATEGY is shameful, vicious, sinister, despicable and reprehensible. They have nothing but lies in their opposition to the Act on behalf of Fireman, owner of the Liberty National Golf Course, because the Act will protect the entire park including the Caven Point Natural Area Migratory Bird Habitat, urban student science education resource and peaceful urban oasis - which Fireman wants to relocate golf holes for multimillionaires.

Biggest Lie 1 by would-be public-land grabber Paul Fireman's lobbyist is that a "compromise is reasonable" but a "compromise" means he gets to privatize and destroy LSP's priceless and irreplaceable ecological treasure Caven Point Natural Area for private golf holes in quid pro quo return for his throwing money at LSP. Throughout LSP history, the overwhelming majority has clearly and strongly opposed privatization plans for LSP's scarce urban open space and nature no matter what money was promised by those who wanted to dismember the park for their profits.

Lie 2 "Protection Act will forever block" the remediation/cleanup of LSP contamination". The Act would not at all prevent the remediation of LSP contamination. The DEP's 2021 public meeting on remediating the Interior is at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6--fSs9ZiM&feature=youtu.be>

Lie 3 – "Protection Act will prevent the DEP from implementing active recreation in LSP". The Act would not prevent the implementation of active recreation. The DEP's 2021 public meeting on implementing 61 acres of active recreation is at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1vk12YKfdeo> The DEP decided on 50 acres of active recreation in the interior and 11 acres outside the interior after public meetings in the fall of 2020 and winter of 2021 and after obtaining 3500 survey results.

Lie 4 – "Protection Act eliminates the authority of NJDEP to improve and protect LSP". "The Act would privatize oversight of the Park by turning its future over to a select, powerful Advisory Committee." "the Act puts the Friends in charge of all decisions future design, concessions, management of the park, even businesses neighboring the park, and inserting themselves as the only legitimate authority". The DEP always has and will continue to manage LSP and make all final decisions. The advisory committee is only advisory and the Friends has one seat. **The Act empowers the public by requiring the DEP to establish robust public participation.** The Act's main purpose is to protect LSP from large scale privatization – it allows for "small scale commercial activities"

- and also to ensure robust public participation. The public participation requirements will help guide the DEP to make competent, responsible and responsive decisions. The committee will have open meetings as it gives advice to the DEP on issues and on the DEP's task of creating LSP's first management plan.

Lie 5 – "Friends of LSP oppose LSP remediation of contamination and oppose LSP active recreation and wants to leave LSP the way it is forever". who are fighting to keep the status quo - to maintain the Park in its current untapped and toxic state." This is Fireman's surrogates' smear campaign to discredit the Friends of LSP and therefore discredit the Protection Act. Friends have always supported a **Central Park-type park with active recreation. Please see <https://bit.ly/3r19V6b>**

Lie 6 - "Minority voices/communities of color have been excluded from park decision-making." Jersey Journal 8/24/20 - milestone, comprehensively researched story on LSP history refuting Fireman's surrogates shameless **"race card" lies** exploiting the Black Lives Matter movement, with Fireman's false version of LSP history of "exclusion of minority voices" **"Special Report: Whose Park is it Anyway?"** <https://www.nj.com/hudson/2020/08/njs-long-fought-battle-whose-park-is-it-anyway.html> - reporting **that Black individuals and groups have always been engaged with the DEP's LSP plans**, and a longtime Black elected official doesn't recall anyone coming to him or his Black councilwoman colleague with any LSP initiative. Any group or individual could've asked elected officials to advocate for any idea.

Lie 7 – "The Friends of LSP are a tiny group of preservationists who have misinformed environmentalists into believing that LSP is best used as a walking park, limited only as a conduit to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island ferries."LSP is jam-packed on all nice weekends and enjoyed by people of all colors, religions and cultural backgrounds engaging in a multitude of free passive and unstructured active recreation – and with the DEP committed to implementing 61 acres of active recreation. Since 1977, a year after LSP opened, there have been Coalitions of local, regional and statewide groups opposing LSP privatization and advocating for a free park for people and nature. The broad public consensus, the overwhelming majority, 10's of 1000's have opposed LSP privatization. The all-volunteer FOLSP, with our diverse 700 members, have co-organized Coalitions since 1993 with the NY/NJ Baykeeper and the "Coalition to Pass the LSP Protection Act and save the park's Caven Point Natural Area" <http://chng.it/c8sBXHGHKD> has 111 groups with over 40 JC groups. Also, as of 1/9/22 has 31,500 petition signatures (mostly without in-person contact due to covid). support of JC Mayor Fulop and City Council and Hudson County Commissioners' Resolutions.

Lie 8 - "For more than 25 years, this group has done nothing to improve the park." The Friends accomplishments are at <https://bit.ly/3sNfPPy> FOLSP co-led major grassroots privatization battles to protect all areas of LSP "for All the People". Defeating two golf course plans and the commercial waterpark plan for the interior set the stage and **made possible the current plans for the interior's nature habitats/trails and 50 acres of active recreation. **FOLSP has always encouraged public participation in DEP plans**, advocated for and/or funded improvements such as **shuttle buses** (ended by Gov. Christie); Picnic Pavilions; large playground; replacement playgrounds; 950 trees; and LSP's many gardens.**

Lie 9 - Fireman "abandoned" his Caven Point privatization plan in July, 2020. It was a publicity stunt as **he just switched to orchestrating the phony astroturf group and other bought-off surrogates.** <https://www.nj.com/hudson/2020/09/billionaire-funded-group-says-states-plan-to-clean-up-liberty-state-park-is-not-enough.html> On 12/9/21, Fireman's lobbyist Eric Shuffler emailed connections in the Senate Majority Office for the Enviro Committee to get Fireman's surrogates' Nov.docu-sign letter to the Gov, Coughlin & Sweeney - full of lies attacking the Act & Friends and which Shuffler likely wrote.

Lie 10- LSP is mandated to provide economic opportunities for the local business community. Act allows small-scale commercial activities! but LSP is not an economic dev zone.