



CATSKILLCENTER

January 6, 2023

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
Executive Chamber
State Capitol
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Hochul:

The Catskill Center for Conservation and Development is grateful to partner with New York State to implement critical Catskill Park visitor services at the **Congressman Maurice D. Hinchey Catskills Visitor Center – the Catskill Park’s only, official visitor center.**

New York State’s annual investment in the Catskills Visitor Center, through a line item in the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF), supports important recreation and tourism jobs for our region across the Catskill Park. State funding covers a vital portion of costs associated with operating the Visitor Center including staffing, education, outreach, and maintenance, while the Catskill Center supports the remaining costs.

We respectfully **request the continued support of the Congressman Maurice D. Hinchey Catskills Visitor Center in your Executive Budget proposal at \$150,000 within the Environmental Protection Fund, as a line item.** Directing this funding through a line item in the EPF to the Catskill Center for Conservation and Development is critical to basic operations at the Visitor Center. The unique partnership at the Visitor Center, where the Catskill Center and New York State have worked together collaboratively since the Catskill Center first purchased the property in the 1990s, **only works with EPF funding directed to the Catskill Center for Conservation and Development for Visitor Center operations.**

While **maintaining the existing, annual funding of the Catskills Visitor Center at \$150,000 as a line item in the EPF is critical for continued operations,** it is important that State funding be increased to account for the calls for increased investments at the Catskills Visitor Center and to address increasing costs of operations. Therefore, we respectfully request you **increase your support of the Congressman Maurice D. Hinchey Catskills Visitor Center in your Executive Budget proposal to \$200,000 within the Environmental Protection Fund, and that support be a line item directed to the Catskill Center for Conservation and Development specifically.**

Thank you for your leadership on Catskill Park funding, and your understanding of the important economic, public health, and natural resource benefits of environmental investments. We look forward to working with your administration to celebrate the continued success of the unique partnership that is the Congressman Maurice D. Hinchey Catskills Visitor Center.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Senterman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jeffrey Senterman
Executive Director

cc:

Kathryn Garcia, Director of State Operations
Robert Mujica, State Budget Director
Ashley Dougherty, Assistant Secretary for Environment
John O'Leary, Deputy Secretary for Energy and Environment
Caitlin Stephen, Senior Policy Advisor for Environment
Sean Ewart, Assistant Secretary for Energy
Basil Seggos, Commissioner NYSDEC