



*The Family Resort*

# ***Borough of Seaside Park***

**BOROUGH HALL**

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May 31, 2022

Hon. Governor Phillip Murphy  
c/o Rebecca Schwartz  
Senior Aide to the Governor  
225 West State St.  
Trenton, NJ 08625  
**VIA EMAIL ONLY: [Rebecca.Schwartz@nj.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Schwartz@nj.gov)**

**RE.: Urgent Request for Assistance to Address Potentially Emergent  
Health and Safety Issues Exacerbated by Decision to Provide Free  
Access for all Visitors to Nearby Island Beach State Park**

Dear Governor Murphy:

During last Thursday's, May 26, 2022, public meeting of the Borough of Seaside Park's Governing Body, members of the public, our town council, and other officials, first learned of your office's decision to provide free access for all visitors during the upcoming summer season, at the nearby Island Beach State Park. Unfortunately, this public change in policy and procedure, was initiated, without any direct input in the decision making process from the Borough of Seaside Park's officials, though our community will now have to address inevitable health and safety concerns resulting from this determination.

Also, to the best of my knowledge, the other nearby municipality directly affected by this decision to increase traffic and general overcrowding and potentially dangerous circumstances, is the adjoining municipality of Berkeley Township. That municipality is the South Seaside Park section adjoining Island Beach state Park.

Further, kindly recall that the previously enacted determination to restrict parking in Island Beach State Park, attributed by your office to the COVID situation, had a direct negative impact on citizens and visitors to the Borough of Seaside Park, as well as to nearby Berkeley Township. As you are aware, appropriate representatives of both communities had been promised to have direct participation in the pre-season, mid-winter planning for Island Beach State Park's summer procedures and practices, conducted by the DEP. Despite said representation, no such invitation or opportunity was provided to Seaside Park Officials or to nearby Berkeley Township.

Accordingly, I would ask for the kind assistance from your office, as well as the DEP, in providing financial relief toward addressing the inevitable overcrowding and safety concerns, which will now be caused by your decision making, as Island State Park in all likelihood will be closed down, on many upcoming summer week days, as well as weekends. While the State of New Jersey's Treasury apparently has now realized billions of dollars in surplus funds, our local municipalities continue to face significant budget challenges.

Accordingly, I would ask your office, as well as the DEP, to rethink this decision, at the very least, with respect to unlimited free access to the nearby Island Beach State Park. If you are unable to effectuate this immediate step, we would ask for your kind assistance in providing financial aid, or the implementation of any and all other reasonable steps to mitigate these pending unsafe conditions. Attached hereto, please find a copy of a March 18, 2021, letter sent to your office, which generated as of yet, unfulfilled promises for input and assistance. While the aforesaid March 18, 2021, letter dealt in part with what many have labeled to be the ill-conceived COVID parking restrictions at Island Beach State Park, and the inevitable weekend closures referenced therein, will now regularly occur on many weekdays, as well.

Thank you, Rebecca Schwartz, and any and all appropriate officials in the DEP, for your immediate attention to these urgent concerns.

Very truly yours,



Mayor John A. Peterson, Jr.

JAP/cr

cc: Rebecca Schwartz (via email only w/encl)  
Mayor Carmen Amato, Berkeley Township (via email only w/encl.)  
John Camara, Administrator, Berkeley Township (via email only w/encl.)  
Seaside Park Police Chief Boag (via email only w/encl.)  
Sandy Martin, Borough Clerk (via email only, for distribution to members of  
Seaside Park Borough Council for informational purposes only w/encl.)  
Commissioner's Office of the DEP, Shawn M. LaTourette (via fax 609-292-7695  
w/encl.)