

2019 Memorandum in Opposition

Bill: S2934 by Senator Little and A1638 by Assemblymember Jones

Title: Relates to the classification of historical lands and buildings located within the forest preserve.

The Adirondack Mountain Club (ADK) Strongly Opposes this Legislation.

This legislation amends Section 816 of the executive law to require an historic classification for every structure on the Forest Preserve that is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. Unfortunately, this legislation is designed to force the Adirondack Park Agency to use less restrictive classifications, such as an Historic Classification which permits motorized use, rather than to protect areas as Wilderness.

The sponsor's bill memorandum suggests that Fire Towers are threatened without the enactment of this legislation, when actually there are many Fire Towers, 25 in the Adirondack Park and five in the Catskill Park, that have been preserved and restored for tourism by New York State and volunteers. There is even a Fire Tower Challenge and Guidebook organized and published by the Adirondack Mountain Club that encourages the public to visit all of the restored fire towers.¹ All of these Fire Towers have been protected and restored without this legislation.

Clearly, this bill is an attempt to force the Adirondack Park Agency to use less protective classifications when making decisions on how best to protect the public lands of the Forest Preserve. Fire Towers have been protected with Historic Classifications in the Forest Preserve under existing law with the Adirondack Park Agency using good judgement to decide when an Historic Classification is necessary and when it is not. This bill would remove the existing discretion of the agency to make wise choices.

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¹ *Views From On High: Fire Tower Trails in the Adirondacks and Catskills*

<https://www.adk.org/product/views-from-on-high-2nd-ed/>
<https://www.adk.org/play/earn-a-patch/fire-tower-challenge/>
<https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/100900.html>
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