

# Virginia Association for Parks

www.virginiaparks.org

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*"Supporting the Commonwealth's parks,  
natural resources, and historic sites"*

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March 26, 2009

The Honorable Timothy M. Kaine  
P.O. Box 1475  
Richmond, VA 23218

Dear Governor Kaine,

As you know, the Virginia Association for Parks (VAFP) has had a long and close working relationship with the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). VAFP promotes Virginia's state and national parks by encouraging volunteerism and by advocating in appropriate venues.

It is our understanding that House Bill 2172, if enacted, would establish procedures for non-utility electrical generation facilities to interconnect with the transmission grid. We are concerned that this legislation could be interpreted to allow use of state park lands for access to the transmission grid.

VAFP supports the protections afforded public recreational lands that are covered by the provisions of the Land and Water Conservation Act (LWCA). Based on our reading of the Act, Virginia state parks have this protection and in order to build any non-recreational facilities on state park lands a conversion of use process would have to be approved by the Secretary of the Interior. Conversions would also require that any land lost from outdoor recreation or park use be replaced by land of equal recreational value and of at least equal dollar value.

In an effort to further safeguard our state parks from adverse impacts that may already be restricted by the LWCA, we recommend that HB 2172 be amended to make it clear that parks covered by LWCA are not included among the public lands included in the bill. This would protect our state parks and any local park that has received an LWCA grant.

Thank you for giving our recommendation your serious consideration. We stand ready to help you, Secretary Bryant, and DCR in the continuing effort to provide an award winning state park system for Virginians and our visitors.

Sincerely,



Johnny Finch, President  
Virginia Association for Parks

Cc: The Honorable L. Preston Bryant, Jr.  
Joseph Maroon  
Joe Elton