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**THE DELAWARE RIVERKEEPER NETWORK JOINS THE CHORUS URGING
PA'S SENATE TO AMEND "PARKS FOR CASH" BILL**

HARRISBURG, PA. – The Delaware Riverkeeper Network today joined with the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association in urging state Senators to amend a bill that would allow county and local governments to easily dispose of community parks for easy cash. The Senate is poised to vote on the bill – HB 2224 – as early as next week.

“When people entrust their lands, or their tax dollars for the purchase of lands, to their governments they do so with the full expectation that their elected officials will honor the promise of protection made. Allowing governments to cast aside these commitments of protection for short-term financial or political gain is simply unconscionable and dishonest. This bill puts well-loved public land at risk of being sold for quick and easy cash,” said **Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper**. “It tosses out longstanding rules that ensure government cannot sell parks and other greenspaces if the lands provide a public benefit. And it will make communities and landowners think long and hard before entrusting their governments with gifts of property or open space funds in the future.”

The PA House passed the bill in the spring, having escaped any close analysis of its obscure content. Only in recent days did friends of parks and conservation discover the harm that the bill would cause.

In addition to putting parks and greenspaces at risk, the bill:

- Violates the trust and good faith of landowners who donated property for a dollar or sold property to the government at a bargain price with assurances that the land would be used for a public purpose.
- Forces generous landowners to second guess whether they should sell their land at a bargain price for a good cause — a new park — because it shows that government is not to be trusted with such gifts.
- Discards the fair and balanced process local governments have used since 1959 to determine whether public land can be sold.

“Parks shouldn’t be undone on a political whim. If enacted, this bill will do tremendous harm to our parks and greenspaces, and the creeks, wetlands and rivers they protect,” said van Rossum. “The Delaware Riverkeeper Network urges the Senate to protect our parks and greenspaces by amending House Bill 2224.”

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