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Jersey City Mayor Steve Fulop Urges State Lawmakers to Ban Smoking in Parks, At Beaches

June 21, 2014, Reporter Terrence T. McDonald

Jersey City Mayor Steve Fulop yesterday urged the state Legislature to pass a bill that would prohibit smoking in parks and beaches statewide.

The bill, A1080, cleared the state Assembly in March by an overwhelming vote of 64-7 (with four abstentions), but has yet to receive a vote in the Senate.

Fulop, speaking yesterday morning at Van Vorst Park in Downtown Jersey City, said the smoking ban would benefit the state's parks and the health of New Jersey residents. "It's important. It works," said Fulop.

Jersey City passed its own ban last October that makes smoking a no-no in city parks. Six other Hudson County municipalities and the county itself have passed similar bans.



Jersey City Mayor Fulop with Karen Blumenfeld, Esq. Executive Director of Glob Advisors on Smokefree Policy, GASP Summer Interns Alana Weisman and April Dudzinski, Karena Malko of Hudson County Partners in Prevention, and Jersey City Residents.

Anti-smoking group GASP advocated for Jersey City's ban and is hoping the state follows suit. Karen Blumenfeld, the group's executive director, said yesterday that more than 250

of the state's municipalities have prohibited smoking in parks. "We do see this as a movement," Blumenfeld said. "We do believe that it should be 100 percent."



Karen Blumenfeld, Esq., Executive Director of Global Advisors on Smokefree Policy, with Jersey City Mayor Fulop.

Assemblywoman Angelica M. Jinenez, who represents the 32nd District, is a primary sponsor of the bill. Smokers who violate the proposed statewide ban would face fines ranging from \$250 to \$1,000.

Marc Wesson, president of Friends of Van Vorst Park, said that he's been cleaning up the park for nearly two decades.

"It's going to be nice not to pick up cigarette butts," Wesson said.

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