



NEWS RELEASE

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American Littoral Society Joins Beach Access Lawsuit

HIGHLANDS, NJ - The American Littoral Society has received permission from the Appellate Division of the Superior Court of New Jersey to appear as a "friend of the court" in a lawsuit challenging New Jersey's new public beach access rules.

"Every resident of New Jersey has the right to access and use the Jersey Shore. The Corzine Administration has adopted strong rules to make sure that right is protected and can be enjoyed by families and all residents of the state. These rules are a great step forward for fishermen, surfers, beachcombers and anyone else who loves the Shore. The litigation brought by the Borough of Avalon threatens to undermine this effort and privatize the Shore," said Tim Dillingham, Executive Director. "All along the coast, public access is constantly threatened by increasing development and aggressive measures by landowners and towns to exclude the public from significant stretches of beach. These rules seek to eradicate barriers to public access that have been erected by municipalities and private property owners."

The litigation seeks to invalidate public access rules adopted by New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Lisa P. Jackson in 2007. A key element of the rules being attacked is requirements that towns provide regular access points to the beaches along the shore, adequate parking and restrooms when receiving millions of federal and state tax dollars for beach nourishment projects (that replace eroded sand to protect waterfront houses) or for open space acquisition. "When a mother of four gets to the beach, if there's not a place to park and restrooms nearby, there might as well be a big wall between her and the ocean," states Dillingham. "These rules make access real and usable to beachgoers other than those with a house within walking distance - locals and tourists alike. Governor Corzine and Commissioner Jackson have shown great leadership in tackling this issue in a pragmatic way."

"The public is going to put up over \$45 million dollars for protecting beachfront development next year alone. These beaches are built at public expense and must all be open and available to the public," said Dillingham.

The American Littoral Society is a membership-based, coastal conservation organization with offices in New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and Florida. It has a long history of advocacy in defense of public access to the ocean, and has appeared before both federal and state courts as *amicus curie* in the past, including the New Jersey Supreme Court.

Position papers and other materials relating the Society and public access can be found at www.littoralsociety.org.

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