

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

January 16, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi:

As Congress considers measures to stimulate our economy and create jobs through the economic recovery package, we urge you to also invest in the health and vitality of local communities by strengthening our nation's public parks and recreation infrastructure. Specifically, we request that you include funding for the construction and renovation of parks, playgrounds and community recreation infrastructure by providing \$125 million for the Land and Water Conservation Fund's (LWCF) Stateside Assistance Program and \$100 million for the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program (UPARR). We also call upon you to increase funding levels of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program and support additional funding for the National Parks Service Corps (NPSC).

Funding for these important park infrastructure programs has significantly decreased in recent years. As a result, park infrastructure in communities across our nation is in disrepair and hundreds of communities have thousands of capital construction and maintenance projects that are ready to commence pending a commitment of federal funding. In fact, the National Park Service estimates that in 2008, the unmet needs for park and recreation facilities in America's cities, counties, and states totaled more than \$27 billion. These projects, such as new roofs for community centers, irrigation systems for sport fields, repairs to swimming pools, and electrical upgrades to park and recreation facilities, would allow communities to repair, rehabilitate and safely operate already existing infrastructure that provides numerous recreational opportunities for citizens. Since these are "ready-to-go" projects, funding provided by the economic recovery legislation would allow construction to begin quickly, thereby putting local residents to work and helping communities ensure they are providing safe recreational facilities for children and adults alike.

In 1983, Congress recognized the important role community park and recreation construction projects could play in immediately stimulating our nation's economy. The Emergency Job Appropriations Act of 1983 invested in LWCF and UPARR by providing \$40 million to LWCF for development/redevelopment projects and \$40 million to UPARR for rehabilitative grants and repairs. Under this Act, states were encouraged to rapidly fund construction projects that would create employment opportunities between September 1983 and September 1984. As a result of this funding, 572 LWCF development projects and 126 urban park projects were funded in communities and major cities across the nation. Additionally, this Act increased employment by providing 35,000 jobs.

LWCF and UPARR projects are ideally suited to achieve the goals of the proposed economic stimulus package by creating jobs, stimulating economic activity, and putting people back to work. These programs support the creation, maintenance, and restoration of public park and recreation facilities that provide opportunities for physical activity, neighborhood unity, and overall healthy communities.

We are confident that funding these essential public services for the health and vitality of the American people is a proper role for stimulus spending and an excellent way of getting our economy back on track as well as the American people back to work.

Sincerely,



MICHAEL E. CAPUANO  
Member of Congress

JOE COURTNEY  
Member of Congress



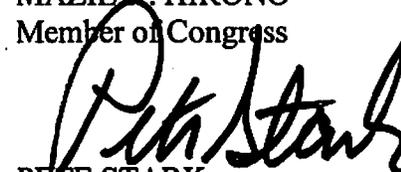
BARBARA LEE  
Member of Congress



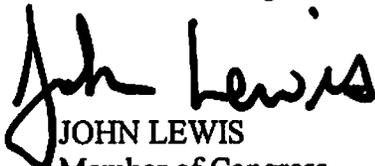
MAZIE K. HIRONO  
Member of Congress



EARL BLUMENAUER  
Member of Congress



PETE STARK  
Member of Congress



JOHN LEWIS  
Member of Congress



ELIOT L. ENGEL  
Member of Congress