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Press Release

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Assemblywoman Valerie Vainieri-Huttle Kicks Off Public Health Drive to Ban Smoking at Parks & Beaches

On April 25 at 10:00am, at Constitution Park in Fort Lee (Fletcher Avenue and Lewis Street) Global Advisors on Smokefree Policy is proud to join Assemblywoman Huttle as she kicks off her public health drive to encourage more towns and counties to make their parks, beaches and other recreational areas 100% smokefree.

On March 20, 2014, the New Jersey Assembly overwhelmingly passed Asw. Vainieri-Huttle's bill A1080, which bans smoking at all state, county and local parks and recreational areas. "We thank Assemblywoman Huttle for her leadership and commitment for creating healthful and environmentally-friendly parks and recreational areas that are smokefree for its residents and visitors, especially the New Jersey's youth," shares Karen Blumenfeld, Esq., Executive Director of Global Advisors on Smokefree Policy.

"Hackensack, Palisades Park, Teaneck and Tenafly, which are located in Assemblywoman Vainieri-Huttle's 37th district, have 100% smokefree parks ordinances, with Fort Lee expecting to do so next month," says Blumenfeld. "26 Bergen County communities make their parks 100% smokefree, and 238 New Jersey communities restrict smoking in their respective recreational areas, showing high public demand to keep parks healthful, clean and green."

"100% smokefree parks and beaches help to normalize nonsmoking outdoor environments where children engage in recreational activities, reducing the likelihood they'll start smoking," cites Blumenfeld. Furthermore, there is no safe level of secondhand smoke even outdoors especially for children and seniors, with studies showing that outdoor secondhand smoke levels can be as high as indoor smoking-permitted locations.

Communities with 100% smokefree parks policies also enhance their green sustainability plans and help to earn Sustainable Jersey points, and reduce preventable fires and tobacco litter, decreasing maintenance costs. Details at <http://njgasp.org/outdoors.htm>

About Global Advisors on Smokefree Policy: Global Advisors on Smokefree Policy is a 40-year old non-profit that tracks laws and policies on tobacco-free living and smokefree environments, and provides educational technical assistance on emerging trends and issues in tobacco control and policy, to policymakers and the public. Go to www.njgasp.org.

From: Sciortino, Jennifer

Sent: Thursday, April 24, 2014 12:58 PM

Subject: **MEDIA ADVISORY: Vainieri Huttie to Join with Fort Lee Officials to Kick Off Public Health Drive to Ban Smoking at Parks & Beaches

News from
Assemblywoman Vainieri Huttie

For Release:

April 24, 2014

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****MEDIA ADVISORY****

Vainieri Huttie to Join with Fort Lee Officials to Kick Off Public Health Drive to Ban Smoking at Parks & Beaches

(BERGEN COUNTY) – With the weather warming up and more people enjoying the outdoors, Assemblywoman Valerie Vainieri Huttie (D-Bergen) and Fort Lee Mayor Mark Sokolich will kick off a drive on Friday to encourage more towns to support restricting smoking at public parks and beaches.

Vainieri Huttie and Sokolich will be joined by various mayors and county officials on Friday, April 25, at 10 am in Constitution Park (Fletcher Ave. and Lewis Street) in Fort Lee where the borough recently banned smoking in the interest of protecting the public health. They will also be joined by officials from NJ GASP (Global Advisor on Smoke-free Policy) and the Bergen County Prevention Coalition. Vainieri Huttie is the lead sponsor of legislation (A-1080) that recently passed the Assembly, which would prohibit smoking at public parks and beaches throughout New Jersey. With roughly three dozen municipalities already enacting similar bans in Bergen County, Vainieri Huttie pointed to the county as a leader in the growing movement to reduce public exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke and preserve the state's natural assets by reducing litter and fire risks.

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