

February 17, 2026



Hon. Timothy Meyer
 Chairman
 Erie County Legislature
 92 Franklin Street – 4th Floor
 Buffalo, New York 14202

ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

HON. JOHN J. MILLS
 11TH DISTRICT LEGISLATOR
 MINORITY LEADER

RE: Chestnut Ridge Park Concessions

Dear Chairman Meyers,

I am writing to request a discussion in committee about concessions in Chestnut Ridge Park. The County has had difficulty in securing and maintaining a vendor at the park. Very recently, the Parks Commissioner informed us that the current vendor is no longer operating in the Chestnut Ridge Casino and vending machines have been installed as a replacement. As the district legislator, this action concerns me. I don't think vending machines are the right fit for our flagship park, and I would appreciate clarification regarding the authority under which this decision was made.

At our last session, Peter Flanagan spoke during the public comment period about his interest in pursuing a contract with the County for this purpose. I understand Mr. Flanagan has expressed concerns over the way the County has handled a prior request for proposals. It is not my intention to investigate his claims or question the Parks Department on the legality of their last process. Our charter authorizes the Comptroller with that responsibility. Of interest to me, is a known food vendor coming to the Legislature insisting in public testimony he could make concessions business work in that space. I think we should, at the very least, explore that idea.

In my opinion, there is a question before the Legislature as to whether we should take action to find a concessions vendor for the Chestnut Ridge Park Casino, or are we in agreement to replace a long-standing concessions practice with vending machines? I propose that we discuss it. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

JOHN J. MILLS
 Minority Leader
 Erie County Legislator, District 11

CC: Hon. Kevin R. Hardwick, Comptroller
 Troy Schinzel, Commissioner; Parks, Forestry and Recreation
 Peter Flanagan, Flanagan Foods