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GUARINI SAVES ELLIS ISLAND BRIDGE

Rep. Frank J. Guarini (D-NJ) today successfully mounted a battle to remove a provision that would have blocked construction of a bridge from Liberty State Park to Ellis Island.

"Protecting the public's best interest has won out over efforts to protect one company's profits," Guarini said.

"The construction of a bridge to Ellis Island is an issue of fairness. It is about making our national monuments accessible to everyone -- regardless of their ability to pay," Guarini said.

"Today, we prevailed in blocking a backdoor effort to kill the bridge and to circumvent the intent of Congress and the President," Guarini said. "Legislation to appropriate funds and approve the bridge has already passed the Congress and was signed into law by the President."

The House today passed an amendment offered by Guarini to remove language that was put in the Interior Appropriations bill that would have prevented the Park Service from issuing the permits necessary to carry forward with construction of the bridge.

"On the day that Ellis Island opened, the Circle Ferry Company doubled their fares to get to the monuments. It now costs a family of four over $20 just to visit Ellis Island," Guarini said.

"Over 40 percent of American families have ancestors who came to the United States through Ellis Island. A pedestrian bridge will ensure that all Americans will have access to a national monument that is such an integral part of our nation's heritage."

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