

Dear [Legislator Name],

We write to express the City of Mackinac Island's strong support for restoring state funding to the Mackinac Island State Park Commission's budget. The City works in close partnership with the Commission to ensure that the hundreds of thousands of visitors who come to the Island each year enjoy a safe, welcoming, and high-quality experience.

While nearly three-quarters of the Commission's annual operating budget is self-generated through admissions and retail sales, those revenues are restricted to paid historic sites and cannot be redirected to support the Commission's broader responsibilities funded through state appropriations. Generating sufficient new revenue to offset these reductions would be extremely difficult without negatively impacting visitor access and experience.

State appropriations are essential to support operations where revenue generation is not feasible. The State Park encompasses more than 80 percent of Mackinac Island, and the Commission is responsible for a wide range of critical services, including:

- Maintaining M-185 around the Island, along with approximately 70 miles of interior roads and trails
- Preserving and caring for more than 125 historic structures, including some of the oldest in the Upper Midwest
- Operating a visitor center, two nature centers, public restrooms, and numerous other public sites—all of which are free and open to all visitors
- Operating the Island's airport
- Providing winter road maintenance, including within the City

The funding reductions have already had significant consequences. Staffing at public facilities, including restrooms, has been reduced; hours of operation have been curtailed; and road and trail maintenance, as well as trash collection, have been diminished. These impacts affect not only visitors but also the residents and businesses that depend on a well-maintained and fully functioning park system.

Since 1895, the Mackinac Island State Park Commission has preserved and protected these nationally significant resources for the benefit of the public. We strongly urge the restoration of state funding to ensure these irreplaceable assets remain accessible, safe, and properly maintained for generations to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Title]

City of Mackinac Island