



**NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF
ULSTER COUNTY EXECUTIVE MIKE HEIN**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 10, 2010

Contact: James J. Hanson
845.802.3138
jhns@co.ulster.ny.us

**COUNTY EXECUTIVE HEIN SUCCESSFULLY ADVOCATES FOR SIGNAGE FOR
THE WALKWAY OVER THE HUDSON ON EXIT 18 OF THE NEW YORK STATE
THRUWAY.**

The new signs are in place for the 2010 summer tourism season.

New Paltz, NY - Following outreach by Ulster County Executive Michael P. Hein, the New York State Thruway Authority is placing signs at Exit 18 (New Paltz) to direct visitors to the Walkway Over the Hudson. The Walkway Over the Hudson is a New York State park located in the Town of Lloyd in Ulster County. The new green and white signs will be visible both southbound and northbound as directional signs. The signs will improve access to the Walkway Over the Hudson so visitors can more easily find and enjoy the beautiful views and educational opportunities this new park has to offer.

County Executive Hein worked with the NYS Thruway Authority to ensure the signs would be posted before the height of the tourism season in keeping with Ulster County's new tourism marketing campaign www.UlsterCountyAlive.com.

"On behalf of Ulster County I wish to thank the New York State Thruway Authority for recognizing the importance of the Walkway Over the Hudson and its impact on Ulster County," said County Executive Hein. "I will continue to advocate for the people and businesses of Ulster County."

Many visitors from New York State and around the world have made their way to the Walkway Over the Hudson. Since opening in October, the bridge has garnered 593,589 visitors and over 9,000 visitors during Memorial Day Weekend alone.

"The Authority is pleased to assist Ulster County promote its historic and recreational sites within the heart of the Hudson Valley," said Thruway Authority Executive Director Michael R. Fleischer. "The Authority hopes that the additional signage will attract more visitors to these sites, ensuring Thruway travelers are able to enjoy the beauty and natural resources of the region."

Joyce Minard, President of the New Paltz Regional Chamber of Commerce said, "This is yet another example of County Executive Hein's commitment to the tourism industry and his administration's emphasis on cutting through bureaucracy. Our chamber maintains a fully-staffed visitor center that is constantly giving directions to this new, wonderful attraction."

"Thanks to County Executive Hein our visitors will now know how to find us, said Elizabeth Waldstein-Hart, Executive Director for The Walkway Over the Hudson. "The Friends of the Walkway Over the Hudson appreciates this kind of leadership from our host communities and from our state partners such as New York State Thruway Authority,"

“Businesses in southern Ulster County appreciate that the County Executive has worked for months with the Thruway Authority to ensure that we make the most of the Walkway Over the Hudson,” said Southern Ulster Chamber of Commerce President Barbara Brouillard.

“Ulster County gets more Walkway traffic because Highland has an accessible entrance with plenty of parking,” said Town of Lloyd Supervisor Ray Costantino. “The placing of this sign is another link in the chain of Walkway-related events benefitting visitors to Ulster County and Mid-Hudson Valley. I want to commend County Executive Hein for a command performance in going to the top and getting this sign done.”

Town of New Paltz Supervisor Toni Hokanson said, “This sign will directly benefit the Town of New Paltz. As more and more people come and go to the Walkway, they will stop locally to eat, to buy gas and to visit other attractions. The Southern Ulster Alliance is actively working on connecting the Hudson Valley and Walkill Valley Rail Trails which in combination with the Walkway Over the Hudson will enhance tourism in the region.

The Walkway Over the Hudson Bridge was first opened in 1888 as a freight rail transportation line. At its height, 3,500 train cars crossed the bridge on a daily basis. The bridge was in continuous use until damaged by fire in 1974. Community support for creating the pedestrian bridge began in 1992 and the bridge was finally opened as a state park in October, 2009. The historic park structure provides a beautiful view up and down the Hudson River.

This park is managed and maintained by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and is open dawn to dusk seven days a week. Entrance is free of charge.

For more information on this and other great attractions, places to stay and eat in Ulster County visit www.UlsterCountyAlive.com.

###