Statement from the Play Fair for Parks Coalition on Mayor Adams' November Budget Modification

November 20, 2024

At a time when our city's parks are literally burning, Mayor Adams' refusal to restore NYC Parks budget cuts is a slap in the face to the New Yorkers who rely on these vital spaces and the Parks workers struggling to maintain them. The Play Fair Coalition, representing over 400 organizations citywide, is outraged by this administration's irresponsible disinvestment in our city's parks system.

By failing to provide basic services and staffing for NYC Parks, the mayor is endangering New Yorkers and weakening communities. These austerity measures prevent the filling of urgently needed positions, including Parks Enforcement Patrol officers, Natural Resources Group staff, and city park workers, who ensure our parks are safe, clean, and accessible.

Cuts to NYC Parks in the FY25 budget eliminated nearly 800 staffing lines, instated a hiring freeze, and ended crucial programs that families depend on. These actions perpetuate a dangerous trend of disinvestment in parks at a time when these spaces are more critical than ever. Faced with the rapidly worsening effects of climate change, parks must be a top priority. The ongoing drought has resulted in 120 brushfires in just the past two weeks—tragic events that could have been mitigated or even prevented through proper maintenance of natural areas.

The mayor's stated commitment to public health, safety, and quality of life stands in stark contrast to his consistent neglect of our city's parks system. Despite pledging to allocate 1% of the city budget for NYC Parks on the campaign trail, his administration has instead repeatedly undermined the agency, bringing staffing levels below pre-pandemic numbers.

We call on the mayor to reverse these damaging decisions and prioritize the restoration and support of our parks, which are vital to the health, safety, and well-being of all New Yorkers.

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The 400+ Member Play Fair for Parks Coalition