

Legislative ALERT



URGENT LEGISLATIVE ALERT CONCERNING PARKS, RECREATION AND CONSERVATION

March 4, 2015

#7-2015

TO: IAPD Members

FROM: Peter M. Murphy, JD, CAE, IAPD President and CEO
Jason Anselment, IAPD Legal/Legislative Counsel

SUBJECT: Urgent Action Needed

OSLAD Funding Under Attack

Late yesterday, an amendment was filed and passed out of the Senate Appropriations Committee to allow nearly \$600 million in dedicated fund sweeps, **including more than \$37 million from the OSLAD grant fund.**

Based upon the committee testimony, the intent of [SB 274 \(Kotowski, D.\)](#) is to allow the Governor to access special funds that have a "surplus" fund balance that is not needed for existing grants or programs.

In fact, the OSLAD funds in [SB 274](#) are not "surplus funds" and are needed to pay for both FY15 grants and for reimbursement of existing projects that are not yet entirely completed. This is because, unlike other special funds, OSLAD is a matching grant reimbursement program that does not allow the State's matching grant portion to be paid to the park district or other local government agency until the grant construction project is completed. Therefore, while the OSLAD fund may appear to have a high fund balance, these funds are dedicated to specific projects and are not a "surplus."

As soon as the amendment to [SB 274](#) was filed and before the bill was called in committee, we met with the Senate sponsor and key staff to explain these critical points. We emphasized that sweeping the \$37 million would prevent the Governor from releasing the FY15 OSLAD grants that were announced earlier this year and undermine the ability of IDNR to provide a match to existing projects upon completion. We received a commitment to work with us to review the OSLAD numbers in [SB 274](#), and we will be meeting again today to seek an amendment to remove the OSLAD fund sweep.

In the meantime, **it is critical that you to contact your Senators today at their Springfield Office and ask them to oppose SB 274 until the OSLAD fund sweep is removed.** [Click here](#) to locate your Senator.

When contacting your Senators, it is important to tell them that that the OSLAD sweep in [SB 274](#) is not "surplus funds" and that the amount is required for existing OSLAD grants, including the FY15 grants. If the OSLAD fund sweep is not removed from [SB 274](#), there will not be funding for this year's FY15 grants that have already been announced.

When you call your Senator, remind him or her that these OSLAD funds will be used to create

jobs through shovel-ready construction projects, and that they will be matched by the local park districts and municipal recreation agencies, which will provide the State with at least twice the return on this important investment.

CONTACT YOUR SENATOR NOW TO PROTECT THE INTEGRITY OF THE OSLAD PROGRAM!