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STEVEN H. CYMBROWITZ  
Assemblyman 45<sup>th</sup> District  
Kings County

June 20, 2018

Basil Seggos, Commissioner  
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation  
625 Broadway  
Albany, NY 12233-1011

Dear Commissioner Seggos:

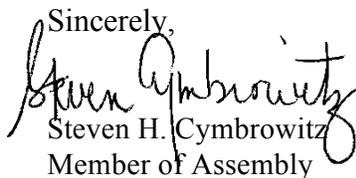
I am writing to you regarding the apparent disappearance of seven swans from Prospect Park Lake in Brooklyn as well as the recent slaughter of a family of swans in Oneida – including the intentional drowning of the baby cygnets -- following a report of an aggressive male swan by a kayaker. Although the U.S. Department of Agriculture did the actual killing of the swans in the latter incident, it was the Department of Environmental Conservation that made the referral.

As the prime Assembly sponsor of the legislation, signed into law in 2016, imposing a two-year moratorium on the State's extermination of mute swans until an acceptable management plan is in place, I find it outrageous that DEC is actively circumventing the ban by enlisting another agency to kill the birds (and in a particularly cruel and reprehensible manner). This deceptive behavior violates the spirit of the moratorium and, equally important, erodes any shred of trust that the public may place in DEC to act appropriately and humanely regarding the mute swans.

My office is currently being inundated with letters from people all over the State who are voicing their concern about the swans in Prospect Park and Oneida. They assumed that the law I authored would keep the mute swans safe, but evidently they were wrong.

I would like to know from you exactly who gave permission to USDA to enter the State and kill the family of swans. Additionally, I want to know why the adults and babies weren't relocated rather than killed, and why an isolated report of an aggressive male swan wasn't investigated thoroughly before it was acted upon, especially since swan attacks on humans are very rare. Finally, I would like your assurance that DEC has no plans to continue circumventing the moratorium that we carefully put in place.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter, and I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,  
  
Steven H. Cymbrowitz  
Member of Assembly