

## **GARY CELEBRATES THE NEW INDIANA DUNES NATIONAL PARK**

**Gary, Indiana**-Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson joined Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb, U.S. Congressman Pete Visclosky, U.S. Senator Todd Young, national park representatives, a number of state and local officials and environmentalists this week for the renaming ceremony and ribbon cutting for the new Indiana Dunes National Park.

The new national park previously known as the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore becomes the 61<sup>st</sup> national park in the United States. The Indiana Dunes National Park spans 15,000 acres and 15 miles along the shores of Lake Michigan with its western edge located in Gary, Indiana.

The designation of the Indiana Dunes as a national park was first introduced over 100 years ago. Many argued that the Indiana Dunes was not in the league with other national parks like Yosemite and the Everglades. While many attempts to rename the Indiana Dunes have been made over decades, a bill introduced in the U.S. House in 2017 picked up some steam, but failed in the U.S. Senate.

Last year the bill moved forward in Congress. Finally, on May 28, 2019, government officials, state park officials and others participated in a ceremony in Gary Park's Miller Woods area to cut the celebratory ribbon to the new Indiana Dunes National Park. The ceremony was held at the Paul H. Douglas Environmental Center located at 100 North Lake Street, Gary, Indiana. The event was hosted by the Dunes National Park Association.

Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson commended and offered congratulations to Congressman Visclosky, Senator Young and Senators Mike Braun and Joe Donnelly for their hard work and effort to bring this national designation home to Indiana and to the city of Gary.