



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Ritchie Urges Public to Join the Fight Against Welfare Abuse

PATTY RITCHIE February 4, 2014

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Online Petition Aims to Stop Welfare Use in Liquor Stores, Bars and Casinos

State Senator Patty Ritchie is urging the public to join her fight against welfare abuse by signing an online petition to stop the use of EBT benefit cards in liquor stores, casinos and adult entertainment businesses.

Her call comes as the State Senate passed a bill—for the third time in as many years—that makes those businesses off-limits for using welfare cards. Senator Ritchie is a cosponsor of that bill (S.966).

[CLICK HERE TO SIGN THE PETITION](#)

“Welfare benefits are intended to help those who have fallen on hard times, to feed their families and make ends meet, and taxpayer dollars shouldn’t be used to buy booze, cigarettes and lottery tickets,”

Senator Ritchie said.

The Senator's "Public Assistance Integrity Act" would prohibit the use of welfare benefits to buy alcohol, tobacco or lottery tickets, and bars the use of EBT benefit cards in liquor stores, casinos and adult entertainment businesses.

New York faces a deadline and the loss of more than \$100 million in federal aid for needy families if it doesn't take steps to crack down on EBT card abuse, which has been the subject of several recent news stories that showed how some welfare recipients are abusing their benefits.

More than a dozen states already have passed similar bans, and Gov. Cuomo recently joined the effort, including a ban in his new Executive Budget. However, the Assembly so far has failed to act.

"This common sense reform has bipartisan support in both houses of the Legislature, but the Assembly needs to act," added Senator Ritchie.

To access Senator Ritchie's petition [click here](#).