



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Betty Little

Breaking ground for new Lake Champlain Bridge

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ALBANY, NY (06/11/2010)(readMedia)-- New York State Governor David A. Paterson and Vermont Governor Jim Douglas today broke ground on a new Lake Champlain Bridge spanning the lake between Crown Point, New York, and Addison, Vermont. The governors were joined at the site of the approach to the former bridge by state and local elected officials, local business leaders and community members to officially kick-off the start of construction of the new bridge.

"Breaking ground on the new Lake Champlain Bridge is an important step in reconnecting our two states and restoring this critical link for commerce, tourism, employment, education and medical services," Governor Paterson said. "I am proud to have worked closely with Governor Douglas to expedite this project, and commend the elected officials, community members and respective transportation officials for their efforts to work together toward a solution."

"Those who live and work in the area surrounding the Lake Champlain Bridge share family, friends and business relationships on both sides of the lake," Governor Douglas said. "The ease and timeliness of transportation across Lake Champlain is critical to their way of life and economy. Everyone involved in this bridge project should be commended for getting us to this point so quickly."

The new bridge will be built at the same location as the previous structure in order to minimize historic and environmental impacts on the surrounding area.

Construction will begin immediately and is expected to be completed in September 2011.

The Modified Network Tied Arch Bridge will be a steel structure with an arch along the center span. Steel used will be treated for enhanced corrosion resistance.

Multiple redundancies in the design make this bridge a safe structure that will have at least a 75-year service life. Bridge components are designed to be easily replaceable to reduce maintenance costs. Travel lanes will be 11 feet wide, with five-foot shoulders that will help accommodate larger trucks and farm vehicles, as well as provide ample room for bicyclists. Sidewalks will be built on both sides of the bridge.

Flatiron Constructors, Inc. of Boulder, Colorado was awarded the contract to build the new bridge. While Flatiron will bring a core team of approximately a dozen

managers, there will be many jobs for local workers with the appropriate qualifications.

New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) Acting Commissioner Stanley Gee said: "Today signifies progress in reestablishing a permanent transportation link between New York and Vermont across Lake Champlain. During the last eight months, we have listened to the public and worked hard to deliver the design for a beautiful new bridge that pays full respect to both the historic and park setting of the surroundings while working at a record pace. We intend to keep up this pace during the construction of the new bridge."

Vermont Agency of Transportation Secretary David Dill said: "Design of the new bridge started almost immediately once it was determined that the old bridge could not be saved. The effort represents a massive undertaking by Vermont, New York, the federal government and the bridge's architect HNTB to design, engineer and permit the new bridge in only a few short months."

The new bridge design was selected following significant outreach through public meetings and an online survey, which found strong community support for replacing the bridge with the Modified Network Tied Arch Bridge. This option was also supported by the bridge's Public Advisory Committee. Public preference was one of many factors considered as New York and Vermont chose the replacement bridge design and played a significant role in the final determination.

The former Lake Champlain Bridge was closed last October after significant cracking was found in the structure's support piers and was demolished in December. New York and Vermont worked quickly to subsidize existing ferry service, and to establish free express bus service between New York and three major employers in Vermont, and shuttle bus service between several New York park-and-ride locations and the ferries.

Additionally, a 24-hour, free, temporary ferry was opened in February, drastically cutting commuting time between New York and Vermont and effectively reestablishing commerce and emergency service along the corridor. Located immediately south of the former bridge, the temporary ferry, operated by the Lake Champlain Transportation Company, will continue to run until the new bridge is opened to traffic.

In business since 1947, Flatiron has extensive experience building major interstate bridges all across the United States and in western Canada. The company rebuilt the Interstate 35W bridge in Minneapolis, Minnesota, following its tragic collapse in 2007. Flatiron has received numerous awards in recent years from some of the largest and most respected trade industries in the United States, including the Associated General Contractors of America, the American Council of Engineering Companies and the American Society of Civil Engineers.

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The following statements were provided in support of the Lake Champlain Bridge groundbreaking:

Senator Kirsten E. Gillibrand said: "This is an important step for the North Country families and businesses who have been deeply effected by the loss of the bridge. The rebuilding of the Crown Point Bridge is critical for the region's economy and for reestablishing this important transportation corridor."

Congressman Scott Murphy said: "I am honored to be here as we begin to rebuild this critical part of our local economy. The loss of the bridge suddenly and severely reduced economic activity throughout the region. I look forward to continuing to work with Governors Paterson and Douglas to connect our two states and rebuild this entryway to the North Country."

Congressman Bill Owens said: "I am pleased to see progress being made on the new bridge across Lake Champlain. This is the next step in the process towards helping our local communities recover from the economic impact of the bridge closure. I'm hoping this will create employment opportunities for those looking for jobs in the area."

Senator Betty Little said: "I have attended many groundbreakings and can't think of one of greater importance to constituents I represent. Since the bridge's closure, our local communities, families and businesses have been managing through a sort of triage to deal with the loss of this vital link. Today marks the first step on the path to full recovery. I commend Governor David Paterson and his staff for all they've done. The cooperation we've seen between both states and all elected officials, as well as the advocacy of community leaders and members, has been very encouraging. We are all eager to once again see a bridge span this beautiful lake and reconnect us

with our neighbors in Vermont."

Assemblywoman Teresa Sayward said: "This is a great day for the thousands of people who depend on this crossing to make their living. I am appreciative of the strong support we have had from both Governor Paterson and Governor Douglas to move this project move forward so quickly."

Randy Douglas, Chairman of the Essex County Board of Supervisors and Supervisor of the Town of Jay, said: "On behalf of everyone in Essex County, I extend our deepest gratitude to Governor Paterson and Governor Douglas for working to quickly meet the needs of our constituents by first securing a temporary ferry, and now beginning construction of a new bridge within six months of the removal of the old bridge. Daily life in both states was severely interrupted when the old bridge was shut down last October, but because of the quick response of these two Governors, the impact was lessened."

Town of Crown Point Supervisor Bethany Kosmider said: "Although the last few months have been difficult for the people of this region, today signifies a new start, and I thank Governor Paterson and Governor Douglas for their efforts to expedite this project. I will continue to work with local, state and federal officials to bring prosperity to the North Country and to Crown Point. We will be leaving a great legacy and I want that legacy to include a renewed hope for the citizens of Crown Point."

Town of Moriah Supervisor Thomas R. Scozzafava said: "During my 22 years as a Town Supervisor, I am pleased to say that I have never witnessed a faster approach to a catastrophic problem in finding both a temporary and permanent solution. When the Lake Champlain Bridge was closed in October, Governor Paterson and Governor Douglas witnessed the many hardships that this created for thousands of their constituents. Without hesitation, they immediately began to work with local officials. Governor Paterson has proven his commitment to the North Country by his decisive actions in implementing the temporary Ferry Service and now a new bridge. This project is a true demonstration that two states, and the Federal government worked in unison to make this a reality."

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