



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Senator Ritchie: Nny Prisons Saved

PATTY RITCHIE June 30, 2011

Praises Governor's Common Sense Approach to Closing List

State Senator Patty Ritchie today said she was relieved—but not surprised—that no Northern New York prisons were included on a list of correctional facilities that are to be closed, and she credited Gov. Andrew Cuomo's common sense approach to saving taxpayer dollars.

"Saving Northern New York's prisons wasn't just about jobs—though that was critical to a region suffering under some of the highest rates of unemployment in all of Upstate New York—but also about looking out for the interests of New York's taxpayers," Senator Ritchie said.

"Governor Cuomo understood that, and at a time when so many other agencies are facing cuts, he clearly saw that our facilities provide better value for taxpayers because they are operated efficiently and safely," Senator Ritchie said.

"On behalf of all the families in our community who are directly affected by the continuing operation of these prisons, I want to thank the Governor for putting the facts ahead of politics," Senator Ritchie said.

Senator Ritchie has spent months working with state and local officials to help make the case to preserve the facilities in Northern New York. She toured each of the five prisons in her district, meeting with corrections officers, administration officials and other employees to get a firsthand understanding of the role they serve for the economy of Northern New York.

She quickly found that they represent some of the most cost effective, least costly to operate prisons in New York State.

"Since my fact finding tour, I have spent the last six months advocating to anyone who would listen in Albany that we need to take a common sense approach to prison closings," Senator Ritchie said. "Even as others were warning that our prisons were endangered, I continued to believe that we could make the case for their survival on the merits."

"I want to congratulate everyone who worked tirelessly to make the case for our prisons. This truly was a community effort, and today's announcement, a well-deserved community victory."