



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Ritchie Recruits Gov. Cuomo in Border Boater Dispute

PATTY RITCHIE July 8, 2011

| ISSUE: **RECREATION AND TOURISM, GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, HUNTING AND FISHING**



Gov Jumps Into Fray Following Senator's Request

State Sen. Patty Ritchie today asked Gov. Andrew Cuomo to intervene in the dispute over Canada's new border rules that threaten to cripple Central and Northern New York's \$150 million-a-year boating and sport fishing industry.

Senator Ritchie met with Lt. Gov. Robert Duffy, Mitch Franz of the Lake Ontario Fisheries Coalition, Henderson Town Supervisor Ray Walker, and representatives of US Sen. Kirsten

Gillibrand and Assemblyman Ken Blankenbush.

At the meeting, she gave the Lieutenant Governor a letter to deliver to Gov. Cuomo that details Canada's surprise crackdown on US boaters in the eastern Lake Ontario basin and St. Lawrence River, and asks for his help.

Lt. Gov. Duffy, in Watertown Friday to speak about Governor Cuomo's achievements in his first six months in office, said that he would discuss the matter today with Governor in advance of an upcoming discussion with high level Canadian officials.

“Governor Cuomo, in his first six months in Albany, has already shown that he knows how to cut through bureaucracy and politics to get things done,” Senator Ritchie said. “That’s why I urged him to get more involved in the current dispute with our Canadian friends over the rules for boating across the international border.”

In her letter to the Governor, Senator Ritchie noted the importance of boating and fishing to Central and Northern New York shoreline communities, as well as those throughout the Great Lakes region bordering the two nations.

Recent studies have found that more than 1,000 New Yorkers directly trace their jobs to tourism in communities that line the shoreline, and the fishing and tour boat industries contribute at least \$150 million to local economies.

She also points out a disparity in Canada’s policy between Northern New York incursions, and those that might occur on Lake Erie, in Western New York, where Canadian authorities said they would stick to the old policy of leaving boaters alone if they don’t anchor in Canadian waters.

Sen. Ritchie has been actively involved in trying to resolve the border skirmish since it was reported in June. She has been in continued contact with her counterpart, Canadian Sen. Robert Runciman, to get an explanation and resolution of the matter from authorities in that country, and she's been meeting with business and private boat owners to gauge the actual impact of the ruling.

Sen. Ritchie's letter to the Governor can be viewed at:

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/59603457/Letter-to-Gov-Cuomo-re-Canada-boat-incident>