



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

Gallivan Continues to Press For Funding For WNY's Rural Schools

PATRICK M. GALLIVAN March 9, 2012

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February 13, 2012

Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
Executive Chamber
The Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

Working together we were able to achieve real progress in last year's budget, but much remains to be done. As we begin the process of developing a budget for the coming fiscal year, we believe that it is crucial to focus on the unique needs and challenges of the low wealth rural schools that we represent.

Competitive Grant Money Should Be Allocated to Rural Students Who Need It Most

Senator Patrick M. Gallivan (R,C,I – 59th District) continued his call today to utilize \$250 million allocated in Governor Andrew M Cuomo's Executive Budget Proposal to restore funding to students in rural, high-need schools, instead of a new "targeted grant" program.

"Rural schools, already disproportionately impaired by a structurally flawed educational aid formula and declining tax bases, were hit the hardest in last year's education cuts," said

Gallivan. “Rural districts rely on state aid far more than the wealthy districts surrounding New York City and on Long Island, and I firmly believe the most responsible and equitable way to distribute this \$250 million is on the schools and the students who need it the most.”

In the Governor’s Executive Budget Proposal, rural schools are slated to receive 76 percent of the \$290 million education aid increase. The Governor’s budget also sets aside \$250 million for a new “targeted grant” program that schools across the state can compete for. Gallivan favors using the grant program money to additionally bolster struggling rural districts by adding it to the school aid fund.

“I believe it is in the best interest of the students and schools I represent that any funds available for education be spent restoring last year’s cuts, which hit rural districts the hardest,” said Gallivan. “I am not asking the Governor to spend one dime more, just that we spend existing dollars where they are needed most.”

Senator Gallivan is not alone in this effort. A letter he sent to the Governor in February has been co-signed by 11 of his fellow upstate Senators.