



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Ritchie Named to Two Budget Committees

PATTY RITCHIE March 14, 2012

| ISSUE: **AGRICULTURE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, SMALL BUSINESS, GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, BUDGET**

| COMMITTEE: **AGRICULTURE**

Albany One Step Closer to Enacting Another On-Time Budget

State Senator Patty Ritchie was named Tuesday night to two bipartisan committees tasked with ironing out differences between the Senate and Assembly budget proposals.

Leaders of the Senate and Assembly announced the appointments, a key step in achieving another on-time budget—only the second time that milestone will be reached in back-to-back sessions in 30 years.

Senator Ritchie was named as a member of the Subcommittee on Environment, Agriculture and Housing, and an alternate member of the Economic Development Subcommittee.

“These appointments fit perfectly with my role as Chair of the Senate’s Agriculture Committee and my top priority of revitalizing New York’s economy to create jobs,” Senator Ritchie said. “I’ve been working to strengthen agriculture and help farmers grow, and I’m committed to helping small business cut red tape and invest more in creating jobs. We have the opportunity to use this budget to achieve those goals and more.”

The Subcommittees were directed to start work right away, and the first public meeting of the Environment, Agriculture and Housing panel was scheduled for this morning. A public meeting for the Economic Development Subcommittee has not yet been scheduled.

This week, both the Senate and Assembly adopted a list of budget priorities that are similar in many ways, but vastly different in others.

Both houses agreed to hold the line on spending, though the Senate is seeking to cut spending to a level even lower than that proposed by Governor Cuomo. If enacted, it would be the second year in a row that Albany actually reduced spending from the prior year, an unprecedented achievement. Both houses also rejected calls for new taxes to balance the budget.

Senator Ritchie’s agriculture priorities include restoring all the funding cuts to programs that help New York farmers, especially dairy farmers. The Assembly only sought to restore a few of those cuts.

Senator Ritchie is also seeking funding to help Oswego County and local farmers deal with a continuing problem with the mosquito-borne virus, EEE, and the Senate wants to reject a proposal to assess dairy farmers with a new fee based on the amount of milk they produce.

In the Economic Development budget, the Senate wants to enact a 20 percent tax cut for small businesses, and other tax credits tied directly to job creation.