



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Ritchie-Griffo Mandate Relief Bill Ok'd by Senate

PATTY RITCHIE April 30, 2012

| ISSUE: **LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

Sets Rules for “Low Use” Roads to Save Taxpayer Dollars

A measure cosponsored by Senators Patty Ritchie and Joseph Griffo that would give local governments more flexibility in maintaining “low use” roads was approved by the Senate Monday.

The “low use” roads legislation was one of the recommendations of Senator Ritchie’s Mandate relief Working Group, a panel of local government officials tapped by the Senator to find ways to cut Albany-imposed mandates, provide greater flexibility to local governments, reduce spending and save taxpayer dollars.

“For many towns in our region, highway costs make up a significant portion of expenditures—at times more than 50 percent. By letting towns designate which roadways are minimum maintenance and low-volume, we ensure that they aren’t held to standards that are just too costly to maintain,” said Senator Ritchie.

The bill, S.3641-A, would amend the highway law and vehicle and traffic law, and allow towns to designate certain roads as low-volume and minimum maintenance roads.

Roads are classified as “low-volume” to cut costs associated with bringing certain roads to state or national design standards.

These low-volume roads do not require as much upkeep—like required plowing for example—therefore saving municipalities money. The legislation would establish a comprehensive and transparent process for towns to designate recreational or agricultural roads as minimum maintenance.

Passage of the bill is just the latest victory for Senator Ritchie’s “Mandate Relief Working Group.”

“Mandates like these are Albany’s way of passing the buck to local governments, and ultimately to taxpayers. I’m pleased to have the opportunity to help do away with mandates like this, and look forward to working towards keeping more money in the pockets of hard-working New Yorkers in the future,” said Senator Ritchie.

The bill, awaiting passage in the Assembly, also ensures that low-volume and minimum maintenance roads can continue to be used at a low-cost as management tools to help towns maintain access to working landscapes, such as forests, lands, recreational areas and agriculture.

[You can access copies of Senator Ritchie's Mandate Relief Working Group reports by clicking here.](#)