



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Stepping Up to Provide Sandy Relief

PATTY RITCHIE November 5, 2012

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Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

Just over a week ago, people across the country waited and watched for Superstorm Sandy to make landfall. Now, left in this storm's path is devastation unlike anything we have ever seen before. Across our state, millions of New Yorkers are living without the necessities, trying to rebuild homes that were destroyed and businesses that now sit in shambles.

For the east coast, there's a long road to recovery ahead. Here in the Empire State, it's tradition to band together in times of crisis. Although we are hundreds of miles away from the disaster area, there are still ways we can pitch in and help our fellow New Yorkers get back on their feet.

If you're looking to help, here are some of the best ways to do so:

- **Donate to the American Red Cross:** The Red Cross has provided more than 23,000 with overnight shelter accommodations to those affected by Superstorm Sandy. Close to 200,000 meals and snacks have been served by volunteers. Financial donations to the Red Cross help to provide food, shelter, emotional support and other forms of necessary

assistance to those touched by disaster. To donate, click [here](#), call 1-800-RED-CROSS or text the word REDCROSS to 90999 to make a \$10 donation.

- Give blood: Hurricane Sandy forced the cancellation of more than 325 blood drives in 13 states. As a result, the Red Cross says there's a significant shortfall of units of blood and platelets. To alleviate the situation, the American Red Cross is hosting blood drives across Central and Northern New York. To find a blood drive near you, call 1-800-RED-CROSS or click [here](#).

Last year in the wake of Hurricane Irene, many of you took part in a collection drive I hosted to help families, farms and communities in the hard-hit Schoharie Valley recover. Once again, my offices will be drop-off sites for items such as canned goods, bottled water, toiletries and other necessities. If you'd like to pitch in, items can be delivered to the following locations:

- Jefferson County: Dulles State Office Building, 317 Washington St., Suite #418, Watertown
- St. Lawrence County: 330 Ford St., basement, Ogdensburg
- Oswego County: 46 East Bridge St., 1st floor, Oswego

Whether you've already made a donation, have participated in a local blood drive, or are a volunteer responder who is on the front lines helping with the relief efforts, I thank you. Remember, although we are many miles away, the impact of making an effort to assist affected communities is immeasurable. I encourage you to step up, band together and help the Empire State get back on its feet.