



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

More Than 2,000 Sign Ritchie Petition to Save St. Lawrence Psych Center

PATTY RITCHIE May 14, 2013

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Ritchie to Deliver Signatures, Statements of Support to State Officials at Wednesday Listening Session

*****[Click Here to Sign the Petition](#)*****

State Senator Patty Ritchie will deliver more than 2,000 signatures and statements in support of St. Lawrence Psychiatric Center to Albany officials at Wednesday's listening session to be held at the facility. The signatures and stories were collected via www.savethecenter.org, a website Senator Ritchie created to allow people to sign her petition as well as share news and updates on the center.

"This has grown from being a local issue to one that is spanning the country, with people from as far away as California, Texas, Indiana and Alaska expressing how they were touched by the care they or their loved ones received from those at the center," said Senator Ritchie.

"These stories have come from people, who with nowhere else to turn, found lifesaving care in the facility.

I hope to impress on the state officials who will visit Wednesday just how important the St. Lawrence Psychiatric Center is to our region, not only for the quality care it provides, but also for the hundreds of much-needed jobs it supports."

Examples of the comments include:

- "Trading inpatient services for outpatient services will condemn recovery for many patients in the North Country. SLPC provides excellent service to our widespread community," said J.A. of Norwood.
- "As an active American Soldier I volunteered myself for the betterment of this nation. As the Commissioner I hope you would have the same intentions of the people around you and do everything in your power to keep the center open," said C.R., of White Lake, MI.
- "We have to travel out of the county for everything else already. Don't take away the one specialized service provider we have left," said B.S., of Lisbon.

The Ogdensburg listening session is the last of 12 being held across the state to collect the public's comments on a plan that could result in consolidation and reduced services at some of the state's mental health facilities.

Senator Ritchie is still encouraging the public to sign the petition and register to attend tomorrow's listening session, which will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the St. Lawrence Psychiatric Center's "Unity Center."

Creation of the website and petition are just the latest example of ways in which the community is rallying to support St. Lawrence Psychiatric Center. Senator Ritchie has been meeting with community leaders to brainstorm additional ways to highlight the facility for Albany officials during Wednesday's visit.