



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Timothy M. Kennedy

Senator Kennedy, Assemblyman Ryan Announce State Funding as Renovation Plans are Outlined at Boys & Girls Club on Buffalo's West Side

TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY February 18, 2014

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State providing \$150,000 grant through the Urban Initiatives program to support Boys & Girls Club renovation project.

BUFFALO, N.Y. – Senator Tim Kennedy and Assemblyman Sean Ryan today announced state funding to support major renovation plans for the Butler-Mitchell Boys and Girls Club, which is an important yet aging community asset on Buffalo's West Side. Boys and Girls

Clubs of Buffalo officials outlined their plans to improve the Butler-Mitchell Clubhouse and broaden its impact in the neighborhood. Kennedy said this major reconstruction project will help strengthen the West Side community and support families who call the neighborhood home.

Kennedy and Ryan announced the state will direct a \$150,000 grant to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Buffalo to support the renovation plans at the Butler-Mitchell Clubhouse. The burgeoning West Side neighborhood relies heavily on the Butler-Mitchell Clubhouse as a community center and as a place for kids to stay safe and out of trouble after school. The renovation plans will upgrade the clubhouse's infrastructure, improve its safety and security, and allow more children and families to be served by the clubhouse's program offerings.

"Buffalo is made strong by our vibrant neighborhoods and the hard work done every day to provide new opportunities for families to achieve the American Dream," said **Senator Kennedy**. "This state investment will foster the strength of the West Side neighborhood and ensure families who live here have access to the support and services they need to achieve their greatest successes. Once these renovations are complete, the clubhouse will have the facilities and resources necessary to fully support local children and families. By investing in the Butler-Mitchell Clubhouse, the state will help this diverse community grow stronger and more prosperous.

"I was pleased to work closely with the Boys and Girls Club to help secure this state funding, and I commend the Regional Economic Development Council for recognizing the importance of this outstanding project," Kennedy added. "This is an investment in renovations at the Boys and Girls Club, but really it's an investment in Buffalo families and the West Side community since this project will undoubtedly improve the well-being, safety and economic vitality of the entire neighborhood."

Assemblyman Sean Ryan said, “I am thankful to everyone at the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council for providing the critical funding necessary for these upgrades to the Massachusetts Avenue home of the Butler-Mitchell Boys & Girls Club. These renovations will allow the Boys & Girls Club to continue to provide important educational and recreational opportunities for the children of Buffalo’s West Side.”

Diane L. Rowe, chief professional officer at the Boys and Girls Club of Buffalo, said, “The Great Futures Start Here Renovation Project at our Butler Mitchell Clubhouse fills a critical need and is a means to strengthen the West Side Community. This 55-year old Clubhouse will be transformed into a multi-use community center that will serve over 500 children and families, will be fully utilized during the day and year-round and will offer a vast array of activities to help create a healthy, sustainable community. Senator Kennedy and Assemblyman Ryan understand how important this Clubhouse is to the neighborhood, and we want to thank them for their support and advocacy on our behalf.”

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Buffalo Great Futures Start Here Renovation Project is an investment in Buffalo’s youth, and Kennedy encouraged the state to provide funding to support this investment in local children and families. The club’s goal with this project and their mission every day is to provide a safe and stable experience that assures success is within the reach of all of their members. The project was designed in partnership with PUSH Buffalo, Journey’s End, Jewish Family Services and the International Institute to help revitalize the community and become a center of hope and opportunity where children, families and the community at large can realize their full potential.

This project will help provide the community with access to safe, affordable, quality childcare and after-school programs. It will expand existing childcare services to 60 percent more children. During the school year, the Butler-Mitchell Clubhouse is not utilized in the morning or early afternoon, which provides the opportunity to open their doors for partner

agencies to offer additional services. This renovation will allow the clubhouse to become a multi-use facility offering new programs to parents, families and the refugee population by Journey's End, PUSH Buffalo, Jewish Family Services and the International Institute. These programs will include cooking and nutrition classes, life skills, parenting classes, GED prep, workforce development, college access, academic coaching, language facilitation and navigating the community in order to have a sense of connectedness.

Once renovations are complete, the Club will have the following enhanced program areas: training kitchen, library, arts in education room, gymnasium, health and science room, learning center, teen center, classrooms and common areas – designed for multi-purpose use, dinner, trainings and large meetings. The project also includes enhancements to the exterior building, new security upgrades and the purchase of furniture for classrooms and common-areas designed for multi-purpose use.

The full cost of the project is estimated to be about \$650,000, and with the state's investment, the Boys and Girls Club has secured a total of approximately \$400,000. The Boys and Girls Clubs of Buffalo are continuing their efforts to raise an additional \$250,000 to launch the project. Depending on when funds are secured to fully cover the costs of the project, the Boys and Girls Club expects to start the renovations during summer 2014 and be completed by end of 2014.

The \$150,000 state grant was awarded through the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council, and the funding comes through the state's Urban Initiatives program. The Urban Initiatives program provides financial and technical resources to New York State communities for the restoration and improvement of housing, commercial areas and community facilities in urban neighborhoods. This program provides grants to not-for-profit organizations that have a direct interest in improving the health, safety and economic viability of a distressed urban neighborhoods.

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Senator Timothy M. Kennedy represents the New York State Senate's 63rd District, which is comprised of the town of Cheektowaga, city of Lackawanna and most of the city of Buffalo. More information is available at <http://kennedy.nysenate.gov>.