



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Third Annual 10th Mountain Division and Fort Drum Day Celebrated at the Capitol

PATTY RITCHIE March 18, 2014

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For the third consecutive year, State Senator Patty Ritchie honored our troops and their contributions to our region with 10th Mountain Division and Fort Drum Day, a special event held at the State Capitol.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH A VIDEO PRESENTATION AND GEN. MIKE HOWARD'S SENATE SPEECH](#)

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“The troops who were able to attend today’s event remind my colleagues and I of the many hundreds of thousands of men and women who volunteer to serve and defend our nation as members of our Armed Forces,” said Senator Ritchie. “Not only that, but they also impress upon us the importance of Fort Drum, not just to our nation’s defense, but also to the Central and Northern New York regions I represent.”

“I’m extremely proud to once again host 10th Mountain Division and Fort Drum Day. I would like to thank those made the trip to Albany including representatives of the many community organizations that support Fort Drum as well as our troops, not only for taking part in the event, but more importantly for the sacrifices they make every day.”

As part of the event, Fort Drum’s Color Guard opened up the day’s Senate Session which also featured an address by Brigadier General Michael Howard, who spoke on behalf of Major General Stephen Townsend, who is currently serving in Afghanistan. In his address, General Howard spoke about the unique relationship between Fort Drum and the North Country, citing the economic boost and employment opportunities the post provides as well as the community resources—namely hospitals and schools—that troops and their families utilize.

“There’s a reason Fort Drum soldiers love the North Country. In my view it’s because they are so uniquely embedded in the North Country,” said General Howard. “In my 28 years of service I moved 13 times and lived on 9 Army installations. Nowhere were the installation and community as intertwined and dependent on each other as they are at Fort Drum.”

In addition, the day-long event also featured displays in the halls of the Capitol hosted by the Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization and active military displays by Fort Drum soldiers.

[NEW!! CLICK HERE TO WATCH A PRESENTATION ON WHAT FORT DRUM MEANS TO NY](#)

Home to 38,000 soldiers and family members, Fort Drum is the largest Army post north of North Carolina and east of the Mississippi River. In addition, the post also employs nearly 5,000 civilians and supports tens of thousands of jobs off base to support the North Country economy. According to a recent economic impact study, it was estimated that Fort Drum pumped more than \$1.4 billion into the North Country economy last year.

[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT FORT DRUM'S IMPACT ON THE NY ECONOMY](#)

Senator Ritchie has been a strong advocate for Fort Drum; securing budget funding to address a critical, regional housing shortage threatening continued growth of the post, and to help protect the facility in the event of new federal military budget cuts. In addition, on Friday, the Senate approved a budget plan included \$2 million to help protect and defend Fort Drum in the face of federal defense cuts.