



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Senate Budget Expands Prescription Drug Program for Seniors

PATTY RITCHIE March 19, 2014

| ISSUE: **AGING, EPIC (ELDERLY PHARMACEUTICAL INSURANCE COVERAGE PROGRAM)**



### **Protects EPIC Program That Nearly 10,000 Central and Northern New Yorkers Depend On**

State Senator Patty Ritchie has announced that the Senate's budget proposal includes an expansion to a program designed to provide relief to low-income seniors struggling with cost of life-saving prescription drugs.

Included in the spending plan is \$2 million to increase the income limits for the Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage program, commonly known as EPIC. Income limits for EPIC—which helps seniors supplement their out-of-pocket Medicare Part D drug plan costs—have not been changed since 2001.

“For seniors, skyrocketing prescription drug costs are a major concern, as many individuals find it hard to afford the medications they need to stay healthy” said Senator Ritchie.

“I know how vital EPIC is to the elderly population of New York State, that’s why I fought to restore funds to the program in the past, and that’s why I’m working to make sure funding is once again included in our the final State Budget.”

Included in the Senate’s budget resolution (R.4036) is \$2 million for the Department of Health to expand income eligibility for EPIC from \$35,000 to \$75,000 for singles and from \$50,000 to \$100,000 for married couples enrolled in the program.

The EPIC program is responsible for helping more than 270,000 income-eligible seniors aged 65 or older, including nearly 10,000 in Jefferson, Oswego and St. Lawrence Counties.