



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Ritchie: State Budget Will Expand North Country Mental Health Services

PATTY RITCHIE April 11, 2014

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### **Includes Funding for Treatment of Up to 270 Additional Residents**

State Senator Patty Ritchie has announced the new State Budget reaffirms the state's commitment to the St. Lawrence Psychiatric Center and provides for the expansion of mental health services in the North Country.

Contained in the recently-enacted spending plan is \$44 million in new funding for community-based mental health care, including \$3.85 million in new funds for the creation and expansion of community-based mental health services in the North Country. The additional aid will provide treatment for up to 270 additional North Country residents.

"The North Country community fought long and hard for the protection of the St. Lawrence Psychiatric Center and the vitally important services the facility provides to those struggling with mental health issues and their families," said Senator Ritchie.

"This new funding represents a new investment in the mental health care our region offers and further solidifies the St. Lawrence Psychiatric Center's playing a central role in delivering the quality and compassionate care our community depends upon."

Senator Ritchie has been a strong supporter of preserving mental healthcare in the region she represents, working alongside the community and the St. Lawrence Psychiatric Center Task Force to have the facility designated as a "Center of Excellence."

In addition, Senator Ritchie has been focused on the economic development potential of unused lands at the St. Lawrence Psychiatric Center. Most recently, her proposal to authorize the transfer of 45 acres of vacant land at the campus to the City of Ogdensburg as part of a broad plan to redevelop unused parcels at the site to create jobs was included in the newly-enacted State Budget.