



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Another Session of Making Strides at the State Capitol

PATTY RITCHIE June 23, 2014

### Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

Just recently, my colleagues and I wrapped up the 2014 Legislative Session in Albany. As State Senator, my top priority is creating more opportunities for the people who live in our region and I'm pleased to report that in the past several months, we have made significant strides towards doing just that.

One of the biggest parts of creating more opportunities in Central and Northern New York is working to grow jobs and boost our economy. Here's a roundup of some of our recent efforts that will help the people and businesses of our region succeed:

- Contained in the new State Budget are major tax cuts for manufacturers as well as reduced energy taxes to help local businesses grow and create new job opportunities;
- In the most recent Regional Economic Development Council Awards, Central and Northern New York brought home a total of \$150 million in funding; bringing the three-year total to \$542.7 million in funding for the two regions—more than any part of our state;
- The 2014-15 State Budget also includes a record amount of funding for the STAR program—\$3.4 billion, which includes \$905 million in relief through the Enhanced STAR program for senior citizen homeowners and \$1.5 billion in relief over the next three years from a new tax freeze program;
- As a result of the new property tax rebate program, as many as 2.8 million property taxpayers outside of New York City will receive direct property tax rebate checks in their mailboxes in October; and

- The passage of components of my “Young Farmers NY,” program—an initiative to address the issue of New York’s aging farmer population that includes farmer innovation grants, student loan forgiveness for college graduates who commit to farming careers, increased funding for the in-school FFA program and also reforms to the Estate Tax to make it easier for families to pass on their farm business to the next generation.

For a full list of legislation I sponsored this session, [click here](#). Together, we’ve made some great progress this year at the Capitol; creating jobs and working to foster new opportunities for New Yorkers across the state. Moving forward, I’ll continue to work across the aisle to improve our region for those who live here.