



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Will You Stand Up for Fort Drum?

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WILL YOU STAND UP FOR FORT DRUM?

Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

Living in Upstate New York, it's hard to imagine life without Fort Drum. It's soldiers are not only defenders of our freedom, they—and their families—are our friends, coworkers and neighbors. In addition, the post also has an unparalleled positive impact on our region, supporting thousands of jobs and pumping roughly \$1.4 billion into our economy annually.

Currently, the military is studying what would happen if it cut 16,000 soldiers and civilians from Fort Drum. In light of possible reductions, I'm teaming with local leaders and organizations, like the Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization (FDRLO) to gather support for the post.

If Fort Drum is important to you, I ask that you sign the petition in support of the post, which I just launched on www.StandUpForFortDrum.com. You have until August 25th to sign, and then all signatures will be added to those being collected by community leaders and groups like the FDRLO and then forwarded to the Army.

Fort Drum is such an asset to our region, state and nation. That's why I'm continuously working to support the post and its soldiers, as well as their families. Here's a look at some of my recent efforts on behalf of Fort Drum, its soldiers, their families and the veterans who call our region home:

- Hosting "10th Mountain Division and Fort Drum Day" at the Capitol in Albany for the third consecutive year in an effort to honor our troops and familiarize my colleagues with the importance of Fort Drum and the 10th Mountain Division;
- Rallying a bipartisan group of 85 State Senators and Assembly Members to sign on to a letter to Governor Cuomo, encouraging him to enlist the support of leaders in Albany, New York City and Washington, D.C. to protect Fort Drum; and
- Looking for new ways to help our veterans as part of the Council of State Governments "Task Force on Military and Veterans Affairs," a group comprised of elected officials and leaders from across the country whose focus is identifying key issues facing veterans.

These are just a few of the ways I'm working to stand up for our soldiers and Fort Drum. You can join the fight too, by signing the petition, available at www.StandUpForFortDrum. Our communities have welcomed Fort Drum soldiers and their families with open arms, let's stand behind them and show the Army we want the post to succeed and continue to grow for many years to come.