



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Fighting for What Matters to You

PATTY RITCHIE February 9, 2015

| ISSUE: **AGRICULTURE, EDUCATION, CONSTITUENTS CORNER**

Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

As State Senator, it's my job to represent the interests and opinions of the thousands of constituents who reside in the 48th Senate District. As I work to improve our region by creating jobs, boosting the economy, supporting our schools, cutting taxes and more, it's imperative that I learn about what matters to you.

In an effort to do just that, last December I launched my 2015 Legislative Survey. I'm pleased to report that nearly 4,000 people from our region weighed in; sharing their opinions on everything from education issues to how to spend the state's \$5 billion windfall.

Recently, we tallied up the results and key findings included the following:

- 79 percent of participants believe a new law should be passed to make the state's 2 percent tax cap permanent;
- 90 percent of participants support a law that would "cap" state budget increases to prevent overspending;

- 89 percent oppose the “DREAM Act,” a legislative proposal which would make illegal immigrants eligible for taxpayer-paid tuition benefits;
- 71 percent support reform of Common Core;
- 75 percent believe a full repeal of the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA)—a budget gimmick introduced before I was elected, which has cost school districts across the state upwards of \$8 billion since its introduction in 2010—should continue to be a priority in the next State Budget;
- 74 percent oppose the SAFE Act;
- 77 percent support reducing taxes on businesses that create good-paying jobs; and
- 72 percent support increasing funding for “Young Farmers NY” program; an initiative I launched last year to help encourage more young people to pursue careers in farming.

To read the full results of the survey, [click here](#). If you participated in my survey, I’d like to extend my thanks. The results gathered through this effort will help to guide me as I work to represent the interests of the people of Central and Northern New York. If you didn’t participate, but would like to share your opinion on an issue, I invite you to email me at ritchie@nysenate.gov or call my office at (315) 782-3418.