



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

Ortt Urges NFTA to Reconsider Proposed Cuts to Metro

ROBERT G. ORTT April 27, 2015

| ISSUE: **MENTAL HEALTH, DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

Plan to Discontinue Bus Routes Would Have Adverse Effect on Paratransit System

State Senator Rob Ortt (R,C,I – North Tonawanda) today is urging the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) to reconsider its proposed plan to discontinue some of its fixed bus routes, which would consequently impact its Paratransit service.

Paratransit Transportation is a van service used by individuals with permanent or temporary disabilities who are medically eligible. As chairman of the Senate Committee on Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities, Ortt fears cuts to the system would be a quality of life issue with those in the disabled community. The transit service is readily accessible and affordable for an individual who has a physical or mental impairment.

“When a fixed bus route is eliminated, the Paratransit system goes with it, unfortunately,” said Ortt. “I understand ridership is down and certain routes are not being used to its fullest potential, however, alternatives are few for those who use Paratransit, and they depend on it. This public transportation is key for independence for disabled riders.”

Sen. Ortt and his colleagues fought for more money in Albany for the NFTA. He helped to secure a total of \$6.4 million for the NFTA in the recently adopted New York State Budget. Of that amount, \$2.5 million was aside to help the NFTA maintain current schedules for some of

its bus routes. And, \$3.9 million is for capital assistance.

Sen. Ortt says he is willing to sit down with the NFTA's Board of Commissioners and the Western New York Delegation to discuss options to reconfigure possible effected bus routes throughout the Buffalo Niagara region in order to maintain the current Paratransit system.