



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Ritchie Welcomes 10th Mountain Division Commanding General to Capitol

PATTY RITCHIE June 1, 2015

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State Senator Patty Ritchie welcomed the 10th Mountain Division's new Commanding General, Major General Jeffrey Bannister to Albany Monday, for a visit that included meetings with legislators and top aides to the Governor.

"It's an honor for me to welcome General Bannister back to Fort Drum—his second tour at the post—and welcome him to the State Capitol," said Senator Ritchie.

"His visit is representative of the ongoing effort to raise awareness in Albany about the critical role Fort Drum and its troops play in our nation's defense and our state's economy. I'm grateful General Bannister made the trip to the Capitol today and I wish him the best of luck as he continues to lead the Army's most

deployed division.”

During his visit, General Bannister joined Senator Ritchie for lunch and had the opportunity to meet with leaders of the Senate, members of the Assembly and top aides to the Governor. In addition, General Bannister addressed Senate leaders during their pre-session conference, where he thanked lawmakers for their support of Fort Drum and spoke about the Army Compatible Use Buffer Program (ACUB)—which helps protect training areas—planned improvements to Route 26, his upcoming deployment and the future of the post.

Senator Ritchie typically hosts Army leaders at the Capitol during her annual “10th Mountain Division and Fort Drum Day,” however, General Bannister expects to be in Afghanistan—for his sixth deployment since 9/11—during the time in which next year’s event is slated to take place.

As the senator representing Fort Drum’s 38,000 soldiers and family members, Senator Ritchie has been a strong supporter of the post, as well as those who live there. Recently, she advocated for an additional \$3 million in the new state budget to help safeguard military bases, including Fort Drum, from possible budget and troop cuts.

In addition, just last week, Senator Ritchie’s legislation (S.2947) to make it easier for spouses of active duty military to get approval to work in their chosen fields that require licensing or certification by the state was approved by the Senate.