



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

## Senator Young Honored with “Rural Schools Appreciation Award” from the Rural Schools Association of New York

CATHARINE YOUNG July 20, 2015

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COOPERSTOWN – Long a champion for our local school districts, students, teachers, and parents, Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I- Olean) recently received statewide recognition with the “Rural Schools Appreciation Award” for her work advocating for rural school districts across the state.

The award was presented to Senator Young by the Rural Schools Association of New York at their annual conference, in recognition of her work as Chair of the Legislative Commission on Rural Resources, her efforts on behalf of children and families, and her legislative initiatives to bolster education in rural communities.

“Senator Young is a stalwart supporter of rural schools and the communities that support them. She is a tireless advocate in the halls of government and is remarkably dedicated in her efforts to communicate with local officials. She always makes sure she understands both the policy and the politics and serves as an effective communicator between her constituents and her colleagues. The Rural Schools Association is honored to recognize her years of wonderful representation of the interests of rural New York State,” said David Little, Executive Director for the Rural Schools Association of New York.

“I am very grateful and deeply honored to receive the ‘Rural Schools Appreciation Award’ from the Rural Schools Association,” said Senator Young. “It is a joy and a pleasure to be able to speak up for our children and to ensure they receive the best education possible. Sound investment in all levels of education, including primary and higher education, is the best way we can combat rural poverty and give our children the opportunities they need to succeed.”

During the 2015 Legislative Session, Senator Young helped secure a record \$582 million in state funding for schools in her district. Her efforts also helped restore more than \$11.5 million in GEA cuts that adversely affected rural, upstate schools, leading to the GEA being nearly eliminated from her schools, with it 94.6 percent gone.

Senator Young also championed sound educational policy for upstate rural schools. Earlier this year, she wrote a letter to the Commissioner of Education requesting that the State Education Department (SED) provide greater flexibility in response to the governor's proposal to use outside independent evaluators. Senator Young argued that the policy failed to take into account the long distance and the limited number of administrators used by smaller rural schools, and that the policy would result in a significant cost burden for local taxpayers.

Last year, Senator Young sponsored legislation, that became law, to bring greater academic enrichment and opportunities to classrooms across the state through the creation of a statewide online and blended learning program. Virtual learning programs, including online courses and blended learning initiatives, combine both a physical location with online resources to provide schools with cost-effective opportunities for students to access coursework and educational resources otherwise not available.