



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael F. Nozzolio

## Special Message from Senator Mike Nozzolio

MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO February 2, 2016

It has been my honor to serve the people of our region these past 45 years, first as a legislative staff member in both the United States Congress and New York State Legislature, and then as an elected representative in the New York State Assembly and State Senate. My work has been extremely demanding, and I took those responsibilities very seriously every single day. I have remained always mindful that my father would have never imagined, as he immigrated to America from Italy as a young man, seeking only the opportunity to work hard, raise a family and become a citizen of the United States, that one day he would have a son who would be elected to serve in the New York State Legislature.

Many are aware that my younger brother Matt died suddenly and prematurely of heart failure eight years ago. Since that time, I have been under the watchful care of my cardiologist and primary care physician. Their diagnosis was recently confirmed by additional medical specialists that within the next few months I will require open heart surgery to repair and replace faulty heart valves.

The serious nature of this surgery will require a minimum of a three to five month recuperation period. The doctors also indicate that even more recuperation time would be required before I could begin to keep the normal hectic pace my schedule has always demanded. This has led me to the decision that now is the appropriate time to announce I will not seek reelection in 2016 for another term, retiring from the job I love, serving the

people of our region in the New York State Senate.

For 17 consecutive elections the citizens of the Finger Lakes/Lake Ontario region have bestowed on me the tremendous honor of serving them as their representative in the New York State Legislature.

Throughout each and every day of the past three and one half decades I have placed my energy and heart into working as hard as possible as the elected representative for the people of the region that I love and where I live, work and always called home. My efforts focused on making government more responsive to the needs of the people I represent, and I have worked tirelessly to create opportunities here for our citizens so they could live, work and raise their families.

Together with my dedicated and professional staff, we have worked very hard against many significant odds to achieve those objectives. Much has been done. We have assisted tens of thousands of constituents with problems they had because of all too remote and often insensitive government. We have worked to save countless jobs from leaving New York State, and encouraged thousands of job opportunities to come to our region. From Auburn to Palmyra to Webster to Lansing to Canandaigua and all places in-between, we have expanded athletic opportunities for our youth and assisted our seniors on fixed incomes with property tax relief and prescription medicine costs. Through our efforts we have been able to provide unprecedented support for our schools, local libraries, police departments and volunteer fire departments.

Mere words cannot adequately express how meaningful it is to help constituents who often have no place else to turn. Assisting constituents make important improvements in their lives, such as getting a new wheelchair, obtaining the proper cancer treatment, saving their job from moving away to another state, helping them work through the mountains of

paperwork of government bureaucracies, and helping both the young and senior citizens find fulfillment through the services available at their public libraries are all types of things we do each and every day.

My efforts have been dedicated to meeting the needs of the Finger Lakes/Lake Ontario region and providing the leadership necessary to enhance our area today and well into the 21st century.

One of my proudest accomplishments was helping to establish the Finger Lakes Institute, located on the campus of Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva. For over a decade it has provided scientific attention to the preservation, protection and promotion of our Finger Lakes, the most important natural resource of our region. The work of the Finger Lakes Institute is enhanced throughout the vast watershed by the Finger Lakes/Lake Ontario Water Protection Alliance which I helped to create and continue to support.

Focusing New York State's support to the critically important applied agricultural research conducted at the Cornell Experiment Station has been an important objective of mine for many years. Our efforts provided the Station with the resources for much needed renovation, and significant new tools for innovation such as the Hiperbaric 55 High Pressure Processing Machine. New greenhouses for agricultural research, labs and office space to nurture job development, and the construction of the Finger Lakes Viticulture Center to educate and train winemakers, winery workers and business owners of the future for the growing New York wine industry are all enhancements I helped to establish. These projects, coupled with our recent announcement to create the Institute for Food Safety at Cornell University and locate it at the Experiment Station's Geneva campus, will position our region to be at the forefront of agricultural research, training, and policy development well into the next century.

It has been an important objective of mine to keep us forever mindful of the enormous sacrifices of our Nation's veterans. Waterloo, New York is the nationally recognized birthplace of Memorial Day. Within its shadow is the site of the Sampson Veterans' Memorial Cemetery, where more than 320 veterans now rest for eternity. I am extremely proud to have helped create this fitting and permanent memorial cemetery to those genuine American heroes. I am both proud and humbled to stand with their families and loved ones in the very moving ceremonies held on warm Memorial Days in May and cold days in December in remembrance and gratitude for their service to our Nation.

For me, these efforts to support our region have been ongoing throughout my adult life. I am very grateful to the many fine mentors I have had through the years. These outstanding citizens had vast leadership experiences at the highest levels of scholarship, government and politics, and I am very fortunate to have the benefit of their knowledge and guidance. Those invaluable learning experiences began when I was a student at Cornell University and selected to be an intern in the United States House of Representatives in Washington, D.C.; continued as a staff member and later as counsel in the legislatures of both our State and Nation; and fully developed as an elected member of the New York State Assembly and New York State Senate.

The many successes I have achieved on behalf of my constituents could not have occurred without the wonderful support of others.

First and foremost, I take this opportunity to give my special thanks and eternal gratitude to my wife Rosemary for her many sacrifices and steadfast support throughout my many years of public service. Never seeking the limelight for herself, she has given much more to me throughout the years than I could ever repay. She has always been a pillar of strength and I am very fortunate to have her by my side.

My sincere appreciation to my excellent, hard working, extremely professional and dedicated staff, especially Joan Grela and Meagan Fitzgerald with their combined over 50 years of excellent service to our constituents.

My heartfelt thanks to the residents of the Finger Lakes for selecting me to be their elected representative for these past three and one half decades.

One of my favorite quotations from the U.S. Supreme Court is that in these United States, the highest public office is that of private citizen. I have always shared that belief, and every day embodied those words in the service I have provided to my constituents.

It has been a tremendous honor and privilege to serve the people of the Finger Lakes region that I love and where I have always called home.

Thank you very much.

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