



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

RITCHIE: \$4 MILLION IN BUDGET TO PROTECT AND STRENGTHEN FORT DRUM, OTHER NYS MILITARY FACILITIES

PATTY RITCHIE April 13, 2016



State Senator Patty Ritchie has announced the new State Budget includes \$4 million to strengthen Fort Drum and other military facilities across the state, as well as protect them from potential future cuts.

“As the country continues to face threats to our national security, making our military stronger and better equipped to face the challenges at hand becomes increasingly important,” said Senator Ritchie.

“As we’ve seen in the past, investments made by New York State have helped to strengthen Fort Drum, making it an even bigger asset to our nation’s military. And, not only do these investments add value to the installation—they improve the entire North Country. I am pleased to see that once again, protecting Fort Drum from cutbacks was made a priority in the new state budget.”

Included in funding announced today is \$1 million for “buffer zones” around Fort Drum’s perimeter, which will help to protect military training areas. In addition, the buffer zones are also seen as a way to preserve thousands of acres of area farmland, which are vital to protecting the region’s agriculture industry.

This marks the fifth year in a row that Senator Ritchie has successfully advocated for “military base retention” funding to be included in the final state budget. In the past, funds now totaling \$15 million have been utilized to help pay for land and easement purchases around Fort Drum’s perimeter, enhancements to local health care services benefitting troops and their families, as well as to support Fort Drum community-based support groups, namely the Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization, and Regional Health Planning Organization.

Home to 18,000 troops and their families, Fort Drum is the Northeast’s largest military post. The installation is also a major part of our state and regional economies, responsible for more than \$1.2 billion in economic activity in 2015, and is New York’s largest single site employer.

