



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

# **Ortt Appointed to New Task Force on Counterterrorism and Public Protection**

Antoinette DelBel

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Senator Rob Ortt (R,C,I – North Tonawanda) has been appointed as a member of the Senate Majority Task Force on Counterterrorism and Public Protection. Senate Majority Leader John Flanagan announced the creation of the Task Force earlier this week following the 15-year anniversary of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

The Task Force will examine and evaluate current anti-terrorism policy that has been implemented since 9/11, and develop legislative proposals on how to improve that state policy and strengthen public security. As a veteran who served as a combat advisor and executive officer in Afghanistan, Senator Ortt says he's honored to be named as a member of this Counterterrorism Task Force.

**Senator Ortt said,** "Serving on this Task Force and protecting our citizens is a critical responsibility and a tremendous honor. I enlisted in the New York Army National Guard in direct response to the September 11 terrorist attacks against our great nation and our great state. As public officials, it's incumbent upon us to cooperate at all levels of government – from the federal down to the local level – while coordinating the multiple offices, agencies, and departments critical to public security, that serve as stakeholders. By emphasizing key elements of prevention and response, this Counterterrorism Task Force will allow us to focus our efforts on making New York a safer place to live for all residents."

**Senate Majority Leader John Flanagan said,** "Senator Ortt brings his vast military experience and leadership to help this Task Force examine ways to improve

our state's counterterrorism and public protection efforts. Senator Ortt recognized the importance of defending our state and country when he enlisted in the New York Army National Guard and served in Afghanistan, and I'm honored to have him as a member of this Task Force to help keep New Yorkers safe."

The Task Force will focus on the prevention, response, and recovery responsibilities of the state and will include: emergency preparedness plans; critical infrastructure protection; cyber security; state/local counterterrorism; school security; electrical power grid security; telecommunication security; coastal waterway/port security; epidemic response; police capital support; and financial recovery response.

After an initial review of counterterrorism and public protection measures, Task Force members will hold public forums, conduct private interviews, and visit critical infrastructure and public protection sites. A final report of findings, conclusions, and legislative and administrative recommendations will be issued by 2018.

Senator Tom Croci (R - Sayville) will serve as chairman of the Counterterrorism and Public Protection Task Force. Other members include: Sen. Pat Gallivan (R - Elma), Sen. Joe Robach (R - Rochester), Sen. Patricia Ritchie (R - Heuvelton), Sen. Andrew Lanza (R - Staten Island), Sen. Martin Golden (R - Brooklyn), Sen. Simcha Felder (D - Brooklyn), Sen. Kemp Hannon (R - Nassau), and Sen. Joseph Griffo (R - Rome).

Senator Ortt also serves on the Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs Senate Committee.