



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

Ortt Thankful That Charitable Duck Races Can Continue on Erie Canal

ROBERT G. ORTT July 12, 2016

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State Senator Rob Ortt (R,C,I – North Tonawanda) today thanked the Governor and local organizations for their efforts to preserve the traditions and benefits of events like charitable duck derby races. Ortt recently introduced legislation that would allow games of chance, including raffles, to be conducted on state-owned property. The New York State Gaming Commission recently interpreted such games to be a violation of state law. Today, the Governor announced a waiver approval process to allow organizations to hold charitable

gaming fundraisers on the state-owned Erie Canal.

“I applaud the Governor for listening to local officials and organizations on this important issue,” **said Senator Ortt**. “This was an example of an antiquated and illogical law that had been on the books for years but was scarcely enforced. Events like the duck derbies were raising money for good causes, not malice, and organizations were about to suddenly be penalized for that solely because those events are being held on state property. I’m thankful that a commitment to common sense and charity won the day.”

Ortt, along with local officials, reacted to the cancellation of a duck derby fundraiser in Brockport after state Gaming Commission officials said it violated gaming laws and regulations. The derby, which has been a summer staple for the Brockport Arts Festival for years, consists of raffled toy ducks floating down the Erie Canal, which is state property.

Under the recent interpretation of state law, organizations could only hold games of chance or raffle events on their own property or on municipal-owned property, not state property. The Governor today indicated that the state would not follow that interpretation and enforce violations, allowing the raffles to continue.