



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

Ortt Applauds State Decision to Issue State of Emergency as Lake Ontario Floods Communities Along Shore

ANTOINETTE DELBEL May 2, 2017

| ISSUE: **GREAT LAKES, FLOODING**



State Senator Rob Ortt (R,C,I – North Tonawanda) today applauded the state's decision to declare a State of Emergency in several counties due to flooding from rising water levels in Lake Ontario. The declaration comes more than one week after Senator Ortt urged Governor Cuomo in a letter (attached) to expand the local State of Emergencies for Niagara and Orleans counties to the entire state.

Senator Ortt said, “Homeowners along Lake Ontario’s shoreline have been doing everything they can to protect their properties from being washed away. Since the International Joint Commission’s federal Plan 2014 policy went into effect this year, erosion across Niagara County’s entire shoreline has worsened. Flooding over the weekend has damaged many homes, businesses and infrastructure. For some residents and business owners, the devastation is irreversible. With this State of Emergency, we can now look into funding sources to help municipalities, homeowners and businesses reclaim some of the losses. Along with Congressmen Collins and local officials, I have railed against Plan 2014 for years and I hope the state will step up to find a long-term solution as well.”

Lake Ontario water levels are reportedly 20 inches higher than normal. The lake is expected to crest on May 14. A State of Emergency allows necessary support to localities and authorizes the use of state aid and resources to alleviate damages in affected areas.

In another letter (attached) to the state Department of Environmental Conservation last week, Senator Ortt requested an expedited DEC Shore Protection Permit process for communities negatively impacted by Lake Ontario’s severe erosion. The permit would allow residents and business owners to protect and stabilize their properties by building out.