



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

The Road to Recovery - Flood Hearing Set

PATTY RITCHIE September 29, 2017



After seeing firsthand, the devastation along the shorelines of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River, it is impossible not to think of those who are still picking up the pieces. My heart goes out to each and every person affected by this historic flooding. In addition to damaging homes and businesses, the high water of this spring and summer washed away an entire tourism season.

It is now critically important to provide our region's struggling homeowners and business owners with the resources they need to start down the path of recovery. Recently, I was

proud to co-sponsor legislation that created the Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence Seaway Flood Relief and Recovery Grant program. This program provides \$45 million—which is in addition to \$22 million that was made available by New York State in May—to support those impacted.

While that money will go a long way in helping people get back on their feet, we all know there are other important aspects to recovery. Over the past few months, I have held several flood relief workshops throughout our region to help connect people with important information on applying for funding and more. These events have also provided me with opportunities to listen to people's experiences and concerns for the future.

Continuing that effort, I will soon be teaming up with Senator Tom O'Mara and Assemblyman Will Barclay to host a special hearing on the record high water levels of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River from this spring and summer. The event will be held on Tuesday, October 10th at Mexico High School and will begin at 4:00 p.m.

This important hearing will be an opportunity to examine all of the factors including the unusual weather—snow run-off and record rains—and the installation of the water-flow management plan known as 'Plan 2014'.

We have invited stakeholders from across the state to discuss their experiences with 'Plan 2014' and their concerns moving forward. We have also invited Great Lakes regulatory bodies such as the International Joint Commission and various state agencies—including the Department of Environmental Conservation and New York Sea Grant—to share their expertise. The discussion will also include various lawmakers discussing funding programs and the potential need for more resources.

For more information on the hearing, and to stay up to date on my efforts to help people rebound from the record high water, be sure to visit my website, www.ritchie.nysenate.gov.