



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael H. Ranzenhofer

2017 Marks Another Year of Legislative Progress

SENATOR MICHAEL H. RANZENHOFER December 20, 2017

| ISSUE: **PENSION FORFEITURE, STATE SPENDING, WORKERS' COMPENSATION REFORM, RIDESHARING, INFRASTRUCTURE**

Look for...

Senator Mike Ranzenhofer's
Monthly Column

...In your local newspaper
the third week of every month

Senator Ranzenhofer's column appeared in the Amherst and Clarence Bees on December 20th. As 2017 draws to a close, and with a new year around the corner, it is important to reflect on the past twelve months. At this time of year, I would like to share with you what I consider to be some of this year's legislative achievements.

On Election Day, the public approved a Constitutional Amendment that clears the way for the criminal justice system to strip corrupt government officials of their pensions. I co-

sponsored and voted for this measure in 2016 and 2017 because hardworking taxpayers should not have to fund the pensions of those who betray the public trust. This represents a major victory in the battle against corruption.

The approved budget was fiscally responsible by limiting spending growth to 2 percent or less for the seventh year in a row. The fiscal plan also protected state income tax relief of more than \$4 billion to help millions of middle-class families and thousands of small businesses. Lastly, reform to workers compensation will make New York more affordable by lowering \$700 million in costs for businesses, municipalities and not-for-profits.

By enacting a responsible budget, we were able to prioritize state funding for important initiatives. I helped secure \$214 million to provide tools to law enforcement and health professionals to combat the heroin and opioid crisis. A total of \$400,000 was allocated for research and education for Lyme and other tick-borne diseases. I also voted in favor of \$95 million in funding for our public libraries, including \$24 million for improvement projects and facility upgrades.

A total of \$1.5 billion was committed to improve our crumbling infrastructure, along with a \$65 million increase for local road repairs. This major boost in infrastructure funding will help to make our highways, roads and bridges safer.

This holiday season is the first with ride-sharing services available in Upstate New York. Earlier this year, I led the effort at the State Capitol to bring this safe, reliable transportation option to our community. According to the STOP-DWI Office, drunk driving arrests decreased by more than 10 percent over the summer in Erie County. It is my hope that ride-sharing will help to ensure a safer holiday season for all of us.

Although progress has been made, there is still more work to be done. It is truly a pleasure to serve our community, and I look forward to serving you in the New York State Senate in 2018. If I can be of assistance to you or your family, please do not hesitate to contact my district office by phone at (585) 454-0322.

I hope that you and your family have a safe and happy holiday season, and I wish you a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year!