



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Ritchie: Senate Budget Includes Key Funding to Support Fort Drum

PATTY RITCHIE March 21, 2018



State Senator Patty Ritchie is announcing the Senate's one-house spending plan includes significant support for Fort Drum, including funds that will help safeguard the post from potential future cuts, as well as to support efforts that will improve the lives of soldiers, veterans their families.

"Not only does Fort Drum play a critical role in our nation's defense, it is also the largest single-site employer in New York State and its tens of thousands of soldiers and family

members are part of our North Country community,” said Senator Ritchie.

“The strength of Fort Drum isn’t just something that benefits our region—it benefits our entire state, as well as our nation. Through these investments proposed in the Senate’s budget, we can protect Fort Drum for the future and in turn, boost our economy, as well as improve our national security.”

The Senate Budget includes funding for the following investments that will support Fort Drum and Fort Drum related causes:

- \$12 million—which was added at the request of Senator Ritchie—for railhead improvements at the installation that would allow troops to deploy more quickly and efficiently;
- \$5 million for the “Military Base Retention Fund,” a fund which Senator Ritchie played a key role in developing in 2012. Since that time, the fund has helped to support a number of projects key to protecting the future of the installation;
- More than \$3.5 million for the Joseph P. Dwyer Veteran Peer to Peer Services Program, a statewide initiative that assists troops and veterans in the region Senator Ritchie represents who are struggling with PTSD; and

- \$1 million for creation of additional "buffer zones" around Fort Drum to protect training and operations at the installation.

In another effort to support local troops and raise awareness of the installation, Senator Ritchie last month hosted “10th Mountain Division and Fort Drum Day” at the State Capitol. The seventh annual event highlighted the contributions the division makes to our national defense, and showcases the ways in which the installation benefits our regional and state economies.