



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Fred Akshar

## **11.12.18 - \$5.1 Million In NYSEG Stadium Upgrades Announced, Rumble Ponies Lease Extended Through 2026**

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(BINGHAMTON, N.Y.) — New York State Senate Majority Leader John J. Flanagan, Senator Fred Akshar, Binghamton Mayor Richard C. David and Binghamton Rumble Ponies President John Hughes announced Monday a \$5.1 million improvement plan for major upgrades at NYSEG Stadium for the 2019 season.

The upgrades will address critical stadium infrastructure, enhance the overall fan experience and provide a top-notch environment for the New York Mets prospects that play in Binghamton.

The upgrades are in conjunction with Rumble Ponies ownership exercising its final five-year option and extending its lease at NYSEG Stadium through 2026, securing Double-A baseball in Binghamton for years to come. The City and team ownership are currently negotiating a new long-term lease for NYSEG Stadium that would begin after the 2026 season.

In addition, the New York Mets and Rumble Ponies are extending their player development contract through the 2022 season.

The \$5.1 million improvement plan includes:

**New Seats** — All seats, original to the ballpark, will be replaced by new seats with cup holders. With a red and blue color palette, the new seats will more closely resemble the official Rumble Ponies colors.

**Structural / Critical System Upgrades** — Maintenance of the stadium's structural steel, concrete repairs and waterproofing measures will prevent future deterioration. Energy efficient HVAC equipment will replace the stadium's original system.

**Turf Replacement** — New sod and drainage systems will be installed to improve field playing conditions.

**New Video Boards** — A state-of-the-art video board will replace an outdated and malfunctioning display board in right field. The high-definition board will be significantly larger than the existing one, installed more than a decade ago. The high-definition board will provide enhanced picture quality for NYSEG Stadium patrons to enjoy. A second board will be installed beyond the left-field wall to replace the existing ribbon message board.

**New Sound System** — New speakers will upgrade the sound system at NYSEG Stadium. The new system will be acoustically tailored to the Binghamton ballpark.

**Renovated Home Clubhouse** – The Rumble Ponies players and coaching staff will benefit from a renovated clubhouse and locker rooms, the first such improvement to the players' quarters since the ballpark opened in 1992.

**New Fencing / Netting** — Replacement of Field level fencing and home plate netting.

The Rumble Ponies organization is pursuing additional improvements to the left-field pavilion area to improve the fan experience, with details to be announced at a later date.

The project is funded from \$2.5 million in state funds secured by Leader Flanagan and Senator Akshar through the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York. The City of Binghamton will contribute \$2.5 million to match the state grant award. NYSEG Stadium has been a city-owned facility since its construction in 1992. Team ownership will be contributing \$100k to the overall project.

Construction work will start within weeks and be finished before Opening Day 2019.

"Baseball isn't just America's favorite pastime – it's a sport completely ingrained in the history of our great state," said Senate Majority Leader John J. Flanagan. "Today, I am proud to announce that we are continuing this tradition through a multi-million dollar investment and improvements at NYSEG Stadium, home of the Binghamton Rumble Ponies. I want to thank Senator Fred Akshar for his unwavering commitment to keeping Double-A baseball in Binghamton, where it will continue to fuel the local economy and ensure that our great pastime will be enjoyed in the Southern Tier for many generations to come."

"Our Southern Tier community has much to offer its residents, and big league entertainment like the Binghamton Rumble Ponies is a huge part of what makes Binghamton a great place to live and raise a family," said Senator Fred Akshar. "It's only through working together with outstanding partners like owner John Hughes, the Wilpon family, Binghamton Mayor Rich David and Senate Majority Leader Flanagan that we were able to continue the legacy of Baseball in Binghamton for local families for the

next decade and beyond."

"By leveraging a significant state investment and new commitment from team ownership, we're keeping baseball in Binghamton for years to come," said Mayor Richard C. David. "Families will enjoy an enhanced ballpark experience and hometown fans of all ages can continue to watch future Major League stars playing in their backyard. These upgrades are long overdue and support the continued growth and revitalization of Downtown Binghamton. My thanks to Leader Flanagan, Senator Akshar, John Hughes and the Wilpon family for their commitment to the City of Binghamton."

"The Binghamton community has been a tremendous partner for us and the commitment from the Rumble Ponies in developing our players is a critical part of our entire system," said New York Mets COO Jeff Wilpon. "Thanks to Senate Majority Leader John Flanagan, Senator Fred Akshar, Mayor Richard David and Governor Cuomo for their support and commitment to NYSEG Stadium and leadership in keeping baseball a vibrant part of the community."

"Today is simply an incredibly great day," said Rumble Ponies President John Hughes, "Our fans, the City of Binghamton, State of New York, and the New York Mets have all shown so much commitment to this team and organization. That support has culminated in securing the future of this team in a facility that has been transformed over the last three years. This will be an unparalleled facility in the Southern Tier — a fantastic place for players to develop, families to have fun and people to watch great baseball. We will be rumbling strong heading into the 2020 Eastern League All-Star Game!"

The Rumble Ponies will start their 2019 home schedule at NYSEG Stadium on April 11, 2019 against the Erie SeaWolves.