



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Betty Little

Little will not seek re-election in 2020

BETTY LITTLE December 6, 2019



State Senator Betty Little today announced she will not seek re-election and will retire from the Senate at the completion of her term on December 31, 2020. Little has represented the 45th District since 2003 and previously served seven years in the State Assembly.

"Although it is very difficult for me to contemplate stepping away from the public service that I love so much, it's time," said Little. "Being able to do this work for so many years has been the greatest honor. I've not taken one moment of it for granted."

“Representing a vast district comprising six counties, two cities, 83 towns, 20 villages and the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe at Akwesasne, I have had a very unique perspective to learn a lot about this region and gotten to know many good people working hard to make better lives for themselves, their families and their communities. As a state representative, I’ve always felt the best I can do is to complement those efforts. Whether it has been through legislation, or funding for so many different and important initiatives and projects, being in a position to help has been so rewarding.

“And, certainly, a lot of this work is about assisting people with their own personal issues. The hands-on constituent work is quiet, behind the scenes advocacy that, for the individual helped, can mean the world. I only wish I could do more.”

Little’s career in public office began in 1986 when she was elected to the Warren County Board of Supervisors. In 1995, she was elected in a special election to represent the 109th Assembly District. When Senator Ron Stafford announced his retirement in 2002, Little ran for and won the State Senate seat in November that year and has been reelected eight times since.

Over the past 19 years in the Senate, Little sponsored 322 new chapters of law. These include measures to protect private property rights by raising the standard for making an adverse possession claim; protect environmentally sensitive grasslands; combat invasive species; and raise awareness of pediatric acute-onset neuropsychiatric syndrome (PANS).

Little said her greatest legislative achievement has been the approval of five State Constitutional amendments to address matters specific to the Adirondack Park. Each amendment required passage by two separately elected Legislatures and then approval by voters on a statewide ballot.

“Amending the State Constitution isn’t taken lightly and convincing my colleagues in Albany this was necessary required a lot of work,” said Little. “In each instance, it took a tremendous amount of collaboration, cooperation and persistence. I commend our local officials, environmental groups and all others who worked on these amendments for their willingness to keep pushing to reach an agreement and to encourage the necessary support of voters across New York State.”

The mother of military sons, Little has been a strong advocate for servicemen and women, sponsoring Patriot Plans I and II to provide various benefits to active-duty military personnel and their families.

Little also spearheaded the effort to create a Women’s Suffrage Centennial Commission and sponsored legislation to protect the childhood home of Susan B. Anthony in the Town of Greenwich.

During her tenure, Little served as chair of the Senate’s Local Government, Tourism and Cultural Arts and Housing Committees and as a member of the Senate Rules and Finance Committees. She is now the ranking Republican on the Senate Education Committee.

Little is a long-time resident of Queensbury. She was born and raised in Glens Falls, attended St. Mary’s Academy and is a graduate of the College of St. Rose with a degree in Elementary Education. She taught on Staten Island and in the Queensbury School District before starting a family. She has six children and 18 grandchildren.

“With the year ahead of me and not having to focus on re-election, I will do all I can on behalf of those I am honored to represent,” said Little. “I plan to spend a lot of time travelling throughout the district and am hopeful for a productive session in Albany. Who knows what will follow when I retire at the end of next year, but I look forward to staying active,

engaged and busy and being helpful wherever and whenever I can," Little said.