



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Tedisco

Tedisco Honors St. Clare's Hospital Pensioners Advocate Mary Hartshorne of Malta as a 2021 NYS Senate "Woman of Distinction"

SENATOR JIM TEDISCO August 26, 2021



Senator Jim Tedisco (R,C-Glenville) today is commemorating Women's Equality Day by presenting the 2021 New York State Senate "Women of Distinction Award" for the 49th Senate District to Mary Hartshorne of Malta for her fierce advocacy on behalf of the 1,100 retired health care professionals of the former St. Clare's Hospital in Schenectady, who lost all or some of their pensions through no fault of their own.

St. Clare's Hospital was closed over a decade ago by a requirement of the state's Berger Commission in its mission to right-size New York's health care facilities, and its operations were absorbed by Ellis Medicine. At the time, the state paid \$58.7 million to cover transition costs, including \$28 million to cover the anticipated needs of the St. Clare's Pension Fund. Unfortunately, for reasons not yet fully identified, that was not enough to cover the fund's pension costs. Since federal law permits a religious exemption, the St. Clare's pension fund has no benefit

guarantee insurance.

“As Chair of the St. Clare’s Pension Recovery Alliance, Mary Hartshorne has been a powerful and effective public voice for the more than 1,100 retirees of the former St. Clare’s Hospital who have been impacted with the devastating economic loss of their retirement savings. Mary Hartshorne has worked night and day as a leader in the effort to fight for these health care workers who cared for some of the most vulnerable and saw their pensions evaporate in the snap of a finger causing many to face dire economic situations in their retirement years. She is truly a woman of distinction and I am proud to represent her and present Mary with this statewide honor,” said Senator Jim Tedisco.

As Hartshorne continues to push for the state and federal government to help provide assistance to the St. Clare’s retirees, the dissolution of the St. Clare’s Pension Fund is currently under investigation by the New York State Attorney General’s Office.

Ms. Hartshorne worked for St. Clare’s Hospital for almost 30 years in various positions including as a registered x-ray technician and ultrasound technologist. She received an associates degree from SUNY Schenectady and attended St. Clare’s School of Radiology while working part-time at Loblaws so she could pay for books, uniforms and tuition. Hartshorne also worked part-time for General Electric Medical Systems as an applications specialist, where she traveled the East Coast teaching ultrasound.

Hartshorne was the oldest of 10 children. She has two daughters, five grandchildren and one great-grandson.

The New York State Senate annually holds a “Women of Distinction” ceremony at the state Capitol in Albany honoring 63 women from across the state, one from each Senate district, whose outstanding accomplishments help move our state forward. Due to COVID-19, this year’s ceremony is virtual with small presentations made in individual member offices.