



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David J. Valesky

Valesky Bill to Form Flood Mitigation Task Force Signed into Law

DAVID J. VALESKY December 1, 2017

| ISSUE: **FLOODING**

Syracuse, NY, December 1, 2017 – Legislation sponsored by Sen. David J. Valesky (D-Oneida) that enacts the Upstate Flood Mitigation Assistance Act was signed into law this week. The new law puts in place a task force to study what can be done to prevent future flooding and to ensure that resources are available to municipalities and other agencies to mitigate post-flooding damage.

In the last several years, Upstate New York has experienced some of the worst flooding in the state's history. More than 100 properties in Oneida were damaged when Oneida Creek flooded in 2013. The Oneida Flats neighborhood was covered in six feet of water, and the flooding permanently forced many residents out of their homes. Areas in Chittenango and the town of Kirkland have also experienced flooding in recent years.

“The 2013 flood in the Oneida Flats area destroyed 154 properties, along with the belongings of the families who lived there. Other areas in Upstate New York are prone to flooding every year, causing problems for homeowners and destroying property. This legislation is a step toward gathering the resources needed to study this issue and to put in place a plan to better manage future flood events,” Valesky said.

The task force will include the director of the canal corporation, the commissioner of transportation, the director of the division of homeland security and emergency services, the commissioner of environmental conservation, and five additional members who have professional experience in one of the following fields: hydrology, civil engineering, climatology, emergency management, and soil and water conservation. They will be appointed within 90 days.

The task force will examine and present a public report that looks at the cost or impact of flooding over the last five years to agriculture; transportation; land use; public health; insurance; economic sectors such as tourism, recreation, and power generation; and effects on infrastructure including bridges, low lying roads, dams, locks, roads, water and wastewater treatment plants, and docks. It will also look at measures, with associated costs, that could be executed to mitigate flood damages, such as floodplain management activities, debris management, and construction of flood control structures.