



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Darrel J. Aubertine

Senate Passes Aubertine Bill to Create 1812 Commission

DARREL J. AUBERTINE July 21, 2009

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Commission will promote tourism relating to the War's 200 year anniversary

ALBANY (July 22, 2009)—The New York State Senate has passed legislation sponsored by Sen. Darrel J. Aubertine to create a commission to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of the War of 1812 (S.5603-c).

“New York played a central role in the War of 1812 and our region saw as much or more combat than any other region in North America. Yet, in the two centuries since, the United States and Canada have built a strong friendship between the neighboring nations,” said Sen. Aubertine, who introduced the bill in the Senate. “Here in Central and Northern New York, this friendship and our border with Canada have fostered economic growth in tourism and cross border commerce. In commemorating the anniversary of this war, we celebrate the peace that has brought with it much prosperity.”

Celebrating this milestone gives New Yorkers the opportunity to appreciate and reflect on our rich history. Many crucial moments in the war came at sites in Oswego, Jefferson and St. Lawrence counties. Sen. Aubertine worked to ensure that each of these counties would be represented in the statewide commission.

Kevin Kieff, Regional Director for the Thousand Islands Region of the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, said, "The establishment of this War of 1812 Commission, with the support of Senator Aubertine will greatly enhance New York State's ability to properly commemorate the bicentennial of the War of 1812. As we work with our Canadian counterparts to mark this occasion, we now have the framework necessary to ensure that the bicentennial will become a major, bi-national cultural tourism event."

The New York State War of 1812 200th Anniversary Commemoration Commission will plan and execute an organized series of War of 1812 reenactment tourism events. The tourism events will highlight the following key sites: Old Fort Niagara, the Battle of Ogdensburg, the Battle of Plattsburg, Fort Wadsworth, Sackets Harbor, and some other events to be determined.

Senator Aubertine introduced the bill as a companion to one introduced by Assemblyman Brodsky (A.8405) and passed in the Assembly. The bill now goes to the Governor for his signature. The 48th Senate District of Oswego, Jefferson and St. Lawrence counties contains more sites on the front lines of the war than any other region of the state. These sites include Oswego, Sandy Creek, Sackets Harbor, Morristown and Ogdensburg. Modern visitors can explore these historic sites by traveling the Great Lakes Seaway Trail, which is a series of connected roads that leads to the forts and historic sites that tell the story of the War of 1812 today.

Teresa Mitchell, President and CEO of Seaway Trail, Inc, Sackets Harbor, NY, serves on the New York State 250th French and Indian War Anniversary Commemoration Commission and said she looks forward to working with another group of knowledgeable individuals to bring New York's War of 1812 history to life.

“This commission will bring together a team of leaders passionate about history and ready to draw attention to this important bicentennial in innovative ways that will draw local, out-of-state and international tourists with an economic benefit to our communities along the Great Lakes Seaway Trail waters that played such a strategic role in the War of 1812,” Ms. Mitchell said. “I want to thank Senator Aubertine for his role in creating this commission and his dedication over the years to celebrating New York’s history.”

“This commission will work with a Canadian commission to promote heritage tourism here in Northern New York and throughout the state,” Sen. Aubertine said. “In this way we are once again building our friendship between the two nations as an extension of continued efforts to build cross border commerce and economic development between our state and Ontario.”