



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Suzi Oppenheimer

## Senator Oppenheimer Awarded Audubon New York's Prestigious William Hoyt Environmental Excellence Award

SUZI OPPENHEIMER April 1, 2011

| ISSUE: **ENVIRONMENT**



*Senator Recognized for Leadership on Smart Growth and Environmental Funding in State Senate Albany, NY March 31, 2011* – In recognition for her outstanding commitment to the environment and leadership in advancing numerous conservation measures in the New York State Senate, Audubon New York and the Audubon Council of New York State selected State Senator Suzi Oppenheimer as the 2011 recipient of the William Hoyt Environmental Excellence Award. The Award, which is named in honor of the popular environmental advocate who passed away in 1992 while serving in the State Assembly, was presented at the at the 2011 spring Audubon Assembly this past weekend at the Gideon Putnam Hotel and Conference Center in Saratoga Springs, NY.

This award is presented annually to an elected official in recognition for work above and beyond the normal call of duty to advance critical solutions to the most pressing environmental issues. Senator Oppenheimer was chosen for her leadership role in championing the Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act in 2010, the first major legislation to address suburban sprawl passed by the legislature in New

York State. In addition, the Senator was also recognized for her strong efforts on the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee to protect the Environmental Protection Fund, and advance critical measures like the Child Safe Playing Fields Act.

“Senator Suzi Oppenheimer has been a true champion for the environment throughout her long career in Albany, and we are thrilled to present this award to such a deserving and dedicated environmentalist,” said Albert E. Caccese, Executive Director of Audubon New York. “From her efforts to protect habitat and water quality in her Westchester District through the creation of the Bi-State Long Island Sound Committee, to her relentless efforts to secure passage of the Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act, Senator Oppenheimer has distinguished herself as a true environmental leader, and one who never backs down from a challenge.”

“Senator Suzi Oppenheimer exemplifies what every state legislator should do to protect the environment,” said John Hannan, Chair of the Audubon Council of New York State. “Her efforts to protect and preserve New York’s open space resources, and conserve the biodiversity of our state are one of a kind, and we are delighted to give this award to such a progressive environmentalist.”

“I am deeply honored to be recognized by Audubon New York and the Audubon Council,” said Senator Oppenheimer. “We live in a time when we cannot take our past accomplishments on environmental issues for granted. That is why the work of Audubon New York is so very important. They have been indispensable in winning critical policy victories for the environment in New York State and a key partner in my work.”

The 2011 William Hoyt Environmental Excellence Award was presented on Saturday, March 26, 2011 at the Gideon Putnam Hotel and Conference Center in Saratoga Springs, New York. Past award recipients include then Assemblyman Maurice Hinchey (1990), Assemblyman William Hoyt (1991), Assemblyman Pete Grannis (1992), Senator Owen Johnson (1993), Congressman Sherwood Boehlert (1995), Assemblyman Richard Brodsky (1996), Assemblyman Steven Englebright (1997), Senator Carl Marcellino (1998), DEC Commissioner John Cahill (2000), Assemblyman Sam Hoyt (2001), Attorney General Eliot Spitzer (2002), Assemblyman Thomas DiNapoli (2003), Governor George E. Pataki (2004), OPRHP Commissioner Bernadette Castro (2005), Congressman Maurice Hinchey (2007), Westchester County Executive Andrew Spano (2008), Assemblyman Robert Sweeney (2009), Assemblywoman Ginny Fields (2010).

For more information about the award and the Audubon Assembly, contact Sean Mahar, Director of Government Relations and Communications, Audubon New York (518) 253-7000 (cell).

*Audubon New York, the 50,000 member State program of the National Audubon Society, is dedicated to protecting birds and other wildlife and the habitats that supports them. Our national network of community-based nature centers and chapters, scientific and educational programs, and advocacy on behalf of areas sustaining important bird populations, engage millions of people of all ages and backgrounds in positive conservation experiences.*