



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## 10th Mountain Division and Fort Drum Day Celebrated at the Capitol

PATTY RITCHIE May 20, 2013

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### **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Event Hosted by Senator Patty Ritchie**

Members of Fort Drum's 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division were honored Monday at "10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division and Fort Drum Day," an event held at the State Capitol, hosted by Senator Patty Ritchie.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH VIDEO OF FORT DRUM DAY EVENT](#)

The second annual event celebrated the commanders and soldiers of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division for their ongoing role in our nation's defense, as well as the post itself for the key role it plays in the region's economy.

"It's such an honor for me to host the Commanding General and his troops here at the Capitol," said Senator Ritchie.

"Not only is it an honor, it's also an opportunity to share the story of Fort Drum with my colleagues from across the state, so they can meet some of the men and women of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division—which is among the Army's most-deployed combat units—who selflessly defend our freedom."

As part of the special event, Major General Stephen Townsend visited the Capitol for the first time, and addressed the Senate Chamber—a rare honor usually reserved for world and other distinguished leaders.

"We all know that what is good for Fort Drum is good for New York. Today in an era of increasing austerity none of us can take the existence of Fort Drum for granted," said Major General Townsend.

"In response to national decisions our Army is downsizing and planning to cut between 8 and 12 brigades. We ask for continued support for your 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division and your Fort Drum."

In addition, a special Color Guard of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division troops presented the flag and led the Pledge to open the Senate's daily public session.

The Senate recognized members of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division—represented by troops from New York, who were on the floor of the Senate for the ceremonies—with an official resolution.

"I would like to thank Major General Stephen Townsend, and the Fort Drum officers and soldiers who made the trip to the Capitol for this special event," said Senator Ritchie.

"I'd also like to thank my colleagues—several of whom had troops from their district visiting today and representing Fort Drum—for graciously welcoming these brave men and women to the Capitol, and pledging their continued support to those who serve."

Home to 38,000 soldiers and family members, Fort Drum is the largest Army post north of North Carolina and east of the Mississippi River. In addition, the post also employs nearly 5,000 civilians and supports tens of thousands of jobs off base to support the North Country economy.

Senator Ritchie has been a strong advocate for Fort Drum; securing budget funding to address a critical, regional housing shortage threatening continued growth of the post, and to help protect the facility in the event of new federal military budget cuts.