



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Measure to Give Capitol Flag to Families of Fallen Heroes Signed Into Law

PATTY RITCHIE November 12, 2013

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### **Bill Cosponsored by Senator Ritchie Named for Slain Fort Drum Officer**

State Senator Patty Ritchie has announced that a bill she cosponsored to create the “Lt. Colonel Todd Clark Memorial Flag Presentment Program” has been signed into law.

The measure, which was named after a 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division officer from Evans Mills who was killed earlier this year in Afghanistan, would provide that every family of a fallen service member be given US and New York State flags that flew over the State Capitol at half-staff in their honor.

“By lowering flags to half-staff, we pay tribute to the tremendous sacrifices made by the brave men and women who serve our country,” said Senator Ritchie.

“This new law allows us to say thank you, and express our sympathy in a very small way to the families and the loved ones of those who have given their lives for the protection of our freedom.”

The Governor has ordered the flags lowered at the Capitol and every state government building at least five times this year, and 12 times in 2012, usually to honor a fallen service member, but also in the case of certain dignitaries, deceased government leaders and national tragedies.

Lt. Col. Clark, a 17-year Army serviceman, was memorialized earlier this year in the Senate with a special resolution, sponsored by Sens. Ritchie and Albany Senator Neil Breslin. Clark was originally from the Albany area.

In addition, Lt. Col. Clark was also a participant in Senator Ritchie's Fort Drum Day celebration in 2012. The annual event aims to draw attention to the service and sacrifice of soldiers at Fort Drum, the Army's largest installation east of the Mississippi River and north of the Mason-Dixon line, as well as the vital role the post plays in the North Country's economy.

*(Lt. Col. Clark is pictured fifth from the right in the back row in the above photo, which was taken in the Senate Chamber at Fort Drum Day 2012)*