



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

## Griffo, Brindisi Secure \$850K for Improvements to The AUD

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO September 4, 2014

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UTICA – Assemblyman Anthony Brindisi and Senator Joseph A. Griffo have secured \$850,000 for the second phase of improvements at the Utica Memorial Auditorium.

The funds are being used for the façade work currently ongoing, and will also be used to make interior improvements, including bathrooms and seating. Griffo and Brindisi worked together to ensure the funds were included in the 2014-15 state budget. Last year, the pair was successful in securing \$2 million for the first phase of restorations.

“Thousands of people are attending events year-round at The AUD, and this is contributing to an increase in business activity in the area, and future plans that will draw even more

people here. It is truly a landmark in our community, and has been recognized as one of the best facilities of its kind in the state, but it still needs improvements to make it even better. The next phase of this project will ensure that The AUD will continue to be the outstanding venue that it is, drawing people from a wide area to professional and scholastic sports events, concerts, and trade shows, among other events,” said Brindisi, D-Utica.

“The AUD continues to attract people across the country and from Canada with its array of sporting events, concerts and regional showcases,” said Griffo, R-Rome. “These funds are an investment in our regional tourism as well as in our city. Improving The AUD is part of the city’s harbor redevelopment and revitalization program, which aims to transform downtown Utica. I am happy to again work with Assemblyman Brindisi to advocate for the priorities of our district.”

“The AUD,” which opened in 1960, is home to the Utica Comets, the AHL affiliate of the Vancouver Canucks; the men’s and women’s ice hockey teams at Utica College; the Utica Jr. Comets, a youth hockey program; the Skating Club of Utica-Whitestown; and several local high school hockey teams.

“The AUD is an historic venue in downtown Utica that is an essential piece of our economic development. Oneida County has continually led the way to repair, renovate and assist in the rejuvenation of this landmark. As home to world class hockey including the return of professional hockey with the success of the Utica Comets as well as one of the top college programs in the country with the Utica College Pioneers, more people are coming downtown and enjoying all Utica has to offer. The County is committed to these renovations and welcomes these funds from Assemblyman Brindisi and Senator Griffo,” said Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente Jr.

“When the Comets organization restored professional hockey to Utica, we found a true partner in New York state. The AUD is one of the premiere arenas in the country. We've worked hard to put a quality product on the ice, and we're pleased that Assemblyman Brindisi and Senator Griffo have once again partnered with us to make our home an inviting and enjoyable place to watch a game. We look forward to welcoming all our fans back to see the improvements during the team's home opener on Oct. 22,” said Robert Esche, president of the Utica Comets.

“Senator Griffo and Assemblyman Brindisi understand the important role the Utica Memorial Auditorium plays in our community and how it has served as a true catalyst for economic growth. Through our partnerships with the State, County and local businesses we are witnessing a rebirth in the City of Utica,” said Utica Mayor Robert Palmieri.