



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

## Sen. Rob Ortt Co-Sponsors Legislation to Repeal Gap Elimination Adjustment

ROBERT G. ORTT January 30, 2015

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Senator Robert Ortt (R,C,I-North Tonawanda) is joining the push to fully repeal and eliminate the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA) section of the education law.

Sen. Ortt is co-sponsoring the bill introduced by state Senator Patrick Gallivan (R,C,I-Elma).

The push comes at a crucial time for school districts in New York. Recent reports from the state comptroller's office identified two school districts in the Senator's district – Niagara-

Wheatfield and Lewiston-Porter – as having “significant” fiscal stress.

“Getting rid of the GEA will alleviate the gaping budget holes facing school districts across Western New York,” said Sen. Ortt. “My district has some of the state’s most disadvantaged urban and rural areas. It’s important to ensure all students are afforded equal opportunities for education. Eliminating the GEA would do just that.”

Ortt said the GEA is a leftover from Democrat control of state government. It was a back-door budget approach by a Democrat Governor, Democrat State Assembly, and Democrat State Senate when the state faced financial difficulties.

“The GEA was passed in 2010 when New York City Democrats ran state government, much to the detriment of Upstate and Western New York,” said Ortt. “Unfortunately, this measure has been hurting school officials, teachers, and children ever since. I promised my constituents I would help overcome this unfair mechanism, and today is an important step in realizing that goal.”

The bill would abolish the GEA starting this school year, and provide school districts with the full amount of aid generated by all existing budget funding formulas.

“The GEA has had a devastating impact on school districts across New York State, denying them critical education funding and putting an unfair burden on local taxpayers,” said Sen. Gallivan. “This reduction in education funding has forced districts to raise taxes, cut classroom staff and eliminate student programs, jeopardizing the quality education every New York child deserves.”

The Gap Elimination Adjustment was introduced in 2010 as a way to help close the state’s then \$10 billion budget deficit. Money that would originally go to school districts is deducted from state aid.

