



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

## Senator Young Secures Economic Development Funding For Her Region

CATHARINE YOUNG April 1, 2015

| ISSUE: **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, LABOR, SMALL BUSINESS, UNEMPLOYMENT, BROADBAND**

*Budget includes \$1.5 billion for the Upstate Revitalization Program, \$400 million for transformative investment programs, \$500 million to support the expansion of broadband availability and \$5 million for the Workforce Development Institute*

ALBANY – Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I – Olean) announced today that communities across her region will have access to economic development funding included in this year's state budget.

Among the positive investments included in the final budget were \$1.5 billion for the Upstate Revitalization Initiative, \$400 million for transformative investment programs, \$500 million to support the statewide expansion of broadband access, and \$5 million for the Workforce Development Institute.

“The budget includes many policies that grow our economy, boost jobs and support workers in every region. Supporting job creation and business growth was a priority for my Senate Republican colleagues and I throughout the budget negotiations,” said Senator Young.

“We were able to open up economic development funds for all areas of the state, so that regions weren’t subjected to the ‘winner takes all philosophy’ proposed by the governor. If a project is good, we should be supporting it, and that’s exactly what this budget aims to do. We will be able to grow jobs, so that people of all ages, especially our young professionals, do not have to leave the state to find quality, high-paying jobs,” said Senator Young.

The Upstate Revitalization Initiative will provide assistance for business growth, tourism, infrastructure, and other efforts to revitalize upstate communities. The program will build upon the success of other regional investment plans, revitalizing the state’s economy by investing in major capital projects that create new jobs.

The Transformative Investment Program is a \$400 million multi-year investment in regionally significant economic development initiatives that create or retain private sector jobs. This funding will help support manufacturing and agriculture, grow businesses, encourage main street revitalization, and strengthen small businesses, a backbone of our state’s economy.

“The Senate fought to ensure that all regions of the state would be able to take part in these economic development programs. Providing residents the skills they need to meet the demands of employers is fundamental to be sure that businesses in our region can compete in the global marketplace,” said Senator Young.

Under the “New NY Broadband Initiative,” \$500 million will be invested to launch a statewide broadband program that will establish high-speed broadband access by the end of 2018. This investment, which is the largest and most ambitious state investment in universal broadband deployment in the country, will incentivize private sector providers to expand high-speed broadband access in underserved communities.

“To compete in today’s digital economy, our local employers need broadband infrastructure. Broadband will increase jobs, economic growth and enhanced quality of life by opening the door for development and job growth, so businesses will be able to respond to their client’s needs and grow their operations,” Senator Young said.

As of July 2014, more than half of the population in Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, and Livingston Counties did not have access to broadband at 25 Mbps, and much of the population had no access at all. The New NY Broadband Initiative will work to eradicate this disparity, by providing access for businesses, hospitals, and schools to indispensable information.

Under this new initiative, priority will be given to projects that bring high-speed internet access to underserved areas of the state, public libraries, and education opportunity centers.

Workforce development funding also took precedence in this year's budget. Senator Young, a member of the Senate's recently established Taskforce on Workforce Development, secured a restoration of \$5 million in funding for the Workforce Development Institute (WDI). The state support will allow WDI to continue its constructive work with businesses and manufactures across the state to provide focused workforce training and transition support services for existing employees to help prevent jobs from being outsourced to other states.

"Job training services are essential to building a strong, capable workforce, as well as a prosperous economy. The Workforce Development Institute has been an outstanding partner with businesses in my district. Their work ensures that our businesses and their employees have the expertise and training needed to be on the cutting edge of their industry. These partnerships will go a long way toward improving Western New York's manufacturing economy and providing hardworking New Yorkers with valuable opportunities," said Senator Young.