



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

## Senators Young and Gallivan Secure Funding to Replace "Old Route 219 Bridge"

CATHARINE YOUNG April 2, 2015

| ISSUE: **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, TRANSPORTATION, BUDGET**

*State of the art span will link Erie and Cattaraugus Counties*

Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I- Olean) and Senator Patrick M. Gallivan (R-C-I, Elma) announced today they have secured \$20 million to build a state of the art bridge to replace the existing span over Cattaraugus Creek along "old Route 219." In addition, they have inserted \$300,000 in the state budget to be deposited in an escrow account that will cover Cattaraugus and Erie counties' costs for maintaining the structure for the first 22 years.

The project will create 280 construction jobs over the two years it will take to complete. It will also save more than 90 Springville businesses, which local residents depend on, and that generate significant sales tax revenue. The new bridge will preserve easy travel to Holiday Valley Ski Resort and Ellicottville, the area's top tourism attraction, and ensure first responders can quickly provide emergency help to the region.

“The establishment of the \$300,000 escrow account will give the counties security that they will have resources to address the new bridge’s maintenance for more than two decades,” said Senator Young. “This structure is eligible for federal assistance, whereby the federal government will cover 80 percent of the upkeep, while the two counties will split the remaining 20 percent. This project is extremely beneficial to Western New York because it creates new, good-paying jobs and economic growth, preserves the local economy and gives local residents emergency care and shopping access they need and deserve.”

“This bridge is critical to the communities on both sides of Cattaraugus Creek and the residents who trek across it each day to shop, visit their doctor, go to work or conduct business,” Senator Gallivan said. “A new bridge ensures the viability of our communities well into the future.”

Under long-established state law, the new bridge must be deeded to the local governments because Erie County owns the approach in the town of Concord, while Cattaraugus County has control of the roadway in the town of Ashford.

The bridge was temporarily closed to all traffic in 2012 for safety reasons. Emergency structural repairs were accelerated by the Department of Transportation (DOT) at the request of Senators Gallivan and Young.

“We experienced what it was like without the bridge in the past,” said Springville Area Chamber of Commerce President Bill Gugino. “This project gives us so much more hope and gives businesses a reason to stay and expand here.”

The DOT previously announced that the current bridge is in such poor shape that it will close in two years. If not replaced, access for residents and travelers, including the Amish who cross the bridge in horse and buggy to shop in Springville, would be cut off.

“The replacement of the old Route 219 bridge is so important to the economy and vitality of the Village of Springville and the surrounding area,” said Springville Mayor William Krebs.

“I thank Senators Gallivan and Young for helping us resolve this issue,” said Concord Supervisor Gary Eppolito. “Without the new bridge, the whole region would suffer.”

Construction on the new bridge could begin as soon as this summer.