



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

Ortt, Senate Celebrates Earth Day and Passes Package of Bills to Protect the Environment, Increase Green Jobs, and Boost Recreation

ROBERT G. ORTT April 22, 2015

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Senator Ortt Sponsored Three Environmental Bills Passed Today

In recognition of Earth Day, Senator Rob Ortt (R,C,I – North Tonawanda) today announced three environmental bills he sponsored have passed in the New York State Senate. These bills were part of a package of bills the Senate passed today that would create new protections for natural resources, promote energy conservation, help create green jobs, and

increase tourism through enhanced recreational opportunities.

Two of the bills sponsored by Sen. Ortt (S2905 and S4279) would promote the use of geothermal energy systems as a natural and renewable energy source while also fostering the creation of green jobs. The bills establish tax credits and incentivize the purchase and installation of geothermal heat pump system equipment.

“This legislation is sensible in its approach and will be significant in its impact,” **said Ortt.**

“Introducing installation incentives and tax credits to the geothermal industry will pay dividends across Western New York. In addition to protecting our environment for future generations, we’re also creating local jobs and helping reduce costs for financially-strapped energy customers.”

Geothermal heat pump (GHP) systems harvest the sun’s energy stored in the ground to heat and cool buildings and to create hot water. GHP systems eliminate oil, gas or propane bills, while also reducing electricity costs for cooling during the summer months. Essentially, this legislation would result in lower energy bills for constituents, and help reduce volatile fossil fuel prices.

Bill Nowak, the executive director of NY-GEO said, “The NY-Geothermal Energy Organization thanks Senator Ortt for recognizing the great savings in energy, emissions and dollars that come with installing geothermal heat pumps to heat, cool and provide hot water for our homes and buildings.

“Senator Ortt listened closely when his constituents told him of the incredible savings they experienced when switching from burning fossil fuels to geothermal heat pumps. His bills for a geothermal tax credit on residential installations (S-2905) and sales tax exemptions for geothermal (S-4279) are on the cutting edge of national policy for bringing renewable thermal

solutions to the American people. We salute Senator Ortt for leading the way to the clean energy future!”

The other bill (S2953) sponsored by the Senator deals with wildlife trapping. This bill authorizes regulations by the Department of Environmental Conservation, and relates to the regulation of live restraint cable devices to take wildlife.

All bills passed by the Senate today will be sent to the Assembly.

The Senate also demonstrated its commitment to the environment in recently enacting a state budget that contains significant funding increases and support for important environmental programs. The Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) was increased by \$15 million over last year to a total of \$177 million to help promote conservation of open spaces, improve natural resources, and enhance communities. More than \$173 million in capital funding for state park improvements were also included.

The budget helped address serious environmental infrastructure needs throughout the state by providing \$200 million over the next three years for grants to municipalities to repair and replace existing wastewater and drinking water systems. An additional \$152.5 million in new funding will support other environmental infrastructure improvements including flood control, clean-ups, and environmental restoration projects. Also, the state Brownfield Cleanup Program was extended and amended so that more potentially contaminated sites will be cleaned up and put back to use to build the economy.