Ortt Applauds Actions Taken to Arrest Those Involved With Alleged Assault on Developmentally Disabled Individual

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Senator Rob Ortt (R,C,I – North Tonawanda), Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Committee Chairman, today applauded the work of State Police and the State Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs for their joint investigation leading to the arrest of five Sunmount employees allegedly involved with assaulting a resident. The Sunmount Developmental Disabilities Services Office is a state-run residential home in Tupper Lake for people with developmental disabilities.

 The Sunmount employees are accused of assaulting an 18-year-old Sunmount resident with developmental disabilities and then trying to cover up the crime. According to police, the individual suffered a head injury, seizure and concussion.

"The allegations against these individuals are serious and if true, completely unacceptable," said Sen. Ortt. "We have a responsibility to make sure that our state facilities, or facilities which receive state funding, protect our most vulnerable citizens from abuse. As an elected

official and committee chairman, I take that responsibility very seriously, and commend the State Police and Justice Center for their continued commitment in this effort."

Corey Casciaro, Suzanne Decheine, Jessica Rice, Jeff Defayette and Scott Norton face more than two dozen felony and misdemeanor charges, according to the New York State Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs. The agency says each pleaded not guilty at Franklin County Court Thursday.

According to reports from the Justice Center, Tupper Lake resident Casciaro, 29, allegedly assaulted the developmentally disabled individual then directed other staff to falsely report details of the incident. Decheine, a registered nurse, is charged with including false information in her reports and failing to report the suspected abuse to the Justice Center.