



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## RITCHIE GETS O.K. TO FAST TRACK IMPROVEMENTS AT OGDENSBURG PORT

PATTY RITCHIE April 4, 2016

Senator Patty Ritchie has announced that a \$2.6 million project aimed at expanding the Port of Ogdensburg and growing its agriculture import-export business will start a year ahead of schedule.

The project—which includes the addition of two grain storage bins, a new conveyor system and the rehabilitation of two rail bridges—was set to begin next year, but the state has moved its timetable at the Senator’s request.

“With its proximity to Canada, and its location as the last deepwater port for outward bound shipping from the Great Lakes, the Port of Ogdensburg can play a key role in growing our economy, and helping to create new jobs,” said Senator Ritchie.

“This project especially positions the Port to better serve the needs of North Country farmers and agribusinesses by making it easier to move products to newer and bigger markets by both rail and water. I’m grateful to the Governor and the state DOT for moving this project forward on a faster pace.”

The Port’s agribusiness project also has been a priority for the North Country’s Regional

Economic Development Council, which highlighted the plan in its third round of funding awards in 2013.

“The Ogdensburg Bridge and Port Authority is very grateful to Senator Ritchie for helping us to better serve upstate New York’s agricultural community,” said OBPA Executive Director Wade Davis. “This funding will help us improve our competitiveness, promote the sale of value added agricultural products and increase our port’s capabilities to serve our global markets.”

Senator Ritchie recognizes OBPA’s role as an economic development engine to help create jobs and strengthen the North Country economy. Last year, she sponsored legislation to modernize OBPA’s bonding authority to support an ambitious expansion at the authority-run George B. Looney Airfield to welcome jet flights to destinations in Florida, and around the country.

That new law will also allow improvements to proceed on the OBPA-owned Ogdensburg-Prescott International Bridge, ensuring that key link to Ottawa and Northeastern Canada can continue to safely and efficiently serve tens of thousands of international travelers for at least another 50 years. In addition, Senator Ritchie secured \$200,000 to fund a dredging project at the Port of Ogdensburg to remove 30 years of silt buildup that had made docking more difficult, dangerous and costly.

OBPA also operates a light industrial park located next to the International Bridge.

Recently, Senator Ritchie introduced legislation (S.6737) to further strengthen OBPA’s mission by directing the state to forgive outstanding debt from the original construction of the bridge, allowing it to better focus on its mission of improving economic opportunity for

residents of the North Country.