



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Pitching in to Protect Planet Earth

PATTY RITCHIE February 27, 2017



There is only Earth—and as such, we all have a responsibility to protect it, not only for today, but also for future generations. One of the most important ways we can safeguard our planet, is by teaching young people the importance of taking steps to preserve it.

This month, I am again launching my annual [Earth Day Poster Contest](#). This program is open to students in grades kindergarten through sixth, and its goal is to encourage children to develop an awareness of the environment and its resources. This year's theme is "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle." Posters should depict solutions to problems concerning recycling and waste

reduction, as well as encourage others to take steps to protect our planet. To enter or for more information, [click here](#). All submissions must be uploaded by March 24<sup>th</sup> and will be available for viewing during the month of April on my website.

While it is important to impress upon our young people the significance of protecting our planet, safeguarding the environment is a team effort. Here are some quick facts that demonstrate just how important it is to recycle:

- Recycling 100 aluminum cans could help light a room in your home for two full weeks;
- If all newspapers in the United States were recycled, roughly 250,000,000 trees could be saved each year;
- Every year, each American throws out roughly 1,200 pounds of garbage that could be composted;
- Recycling a single plastic bottle can conserve enough energy to light a 60 watt bulb for up to 6 hours; and
- Americans throw away 2.5 million plastic bottles per-hour—and each one takes 500 years to decompose.

If you are a parent, guardian or educator, I hope you will encourage the young people in your life to take part in my 2017 Earth Day Poster Contest, to help teach our children about the steps they can take to pitch in and protect our planet. For more details, [click here](#).