



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Flanagan

Majority Leader Flanagan Announces Formation Of Senate Republican Women's Caucus

JOHN J. FLANAGAN May 10, 2017

| ISSUE: **WOMEN'S RIGHTS**



Senate Majority Leader John J. Flanagan (2nd Senate District) announced the formation of the Senate Republican Women's Caucus and appointed Senator Betty Little (45th Senate District) as its Chairwoman. The group will play a key role in setting the Senate's legislative agenda for 2017 and beyond.

The Caucus will address a wide array of public policy matters including making New York more affordable for women and their families, creating career paths and job opportunities for young women and new college graduates, and promoting entrepreneurship and business ownership for women throughout the state, among many other issues. In addition, the newly created caucus will also hold women's leadership forums and other public events across the state to encourage young women to pursue careers in public service and inspire the next generation of women leaders here in New York.

Following the November elections, Senate Republicans now have seven highly qualified and distinguished women members - more than any other conference within the State Senate.

"Our Senate Republican conference benefits greatly from the experience and the perspectives of these outstanding female legislators and leaders for New York, and I am confident the entire state will as well. I am proud that we have the most women of any of the three conferences that make up the state Senate, and am pleased that they will be a strong voice in defining who we are and, even more importantly, who we work for. I thank Senator Little for her enthusiasm in taking on this new role and look forward to the input of every member of this caucus in tackling some tough issues and encouraging young women to pursue opportunities to lead and to serve. We've led the charge on issues important to New York women and their families, and we're going to do so much more," Senate Majority Leader Flanagan said.

The panel will be chaired by Little, a former teacher with more than 20 years of experience in the state Legislature. She is the mother of six children, including an active duty combat veteran, and grandmother of 17 who has won various leadership and community service awards.

“I am very honored to chair this caucus of dynamic Republican women senators who are leading the way on so many issues,” said Senator Betty Little. “We each have our own unique experiences but some things in common. I was a stay-at-home mom for 19 years. That experience is central to who I am and influences my approach to governing. As a state legislator, I’m proud of the work we’ve done to ensure equal pay for equal work, end pregnancy discrimination, and fight for quality schools. With the addition of two new women to our Senate Republican conference this year, our voice and our influence on public policy continues to grow. Working together, we will do even more to champion issues that make a difference to women throughout New York State,” Senator Little said.

Other members of the caucus include:

- Senator Catharine Young (57th Senate District), Chairwoman of the Senate’s powerful Finance Committee and a key player in setting the state’s budget priorities;
- Senator Patty Ritchie (48th Senate District), a former county clerk reelected twice with broad bipartisan support before running for and winning a Senate seat;
- Senator Kathy Marchione (43rd Senate District), a public servant for more than 35 years who has been recognized as a "Woman of Distinction" and once served as President of the New York State Association of County Clerks;
- Senator Sue Serino (41st Senate District), an entrepreneur who used her experience as a single mom to start a business as a child care provider and eventually transitioned to own a successful real estate business;
- Senator Elaine Phillips (7th Senate District), a mother of three daughters and former Mayor of the Village of Flower Hill who worked for over 20 years in the financial services sector and is a champion of transparency in government and affordability for New York families; and

- Senator Pam Helming (54th Senate District), who as Canandaigua Town Supervisor brought jobs and commerce to her community, worked to preserve, protect, and promote water quality throughout the Finger Lakes region and has worked extensively with the developmentally disabled.

The Senate Republican Women's Caucus will focus on ways to increase economic opportunities for women, including obstacles they face in the workforce, review the state's efforts to support victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and rape, and examine solutions to make child care more affordable and to help families achieve a better work-life balance.