



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Ritchie: Senate Bill Would Create \$55 Million Grant Program To Help Repair Homes, Businesses And Municipalities Impacted By Flooding

PATTY RITCHIE May 19, 2017



State Senator Patty Ritchie is announcing the introduction of a measure that would create the "Great Lakes Flood Recovery Grant Program," which would provide much needed support to those impacted by flooding across the state, including in communities along the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario.

The measure (S.6423) would make \$55 million in grants available to property owners, businesses, not-for-profit corporations, municipalities, and counties affected by high water levels in Lake Ontario, Lake Erie, Lake Champlain, and the St. Lawrence River.

"Over the past few weeks, I have been touring shoreline communities along the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario that have been hit hard by this spring's flooding and have seen firsthand how devastating these rising waters really are," said Senator Ritchie. "Homes are suffering damage and businesses – many of which are tourism based – are experiencing significant losses during what is supposed to be their busiest time of year. This bill will help communities rebuild and provide much-needed relief."

This bill establishes a new grant program to promote economic recovery by allowing state financial resources to flow to small businesses, farms, owners of multiple dwellings, owners of residences, not-for-profit corporations, and municipalities. Modeled after the highly successful program implemented after the statewide flooding from storms Irene and Lee in 2011, the program will help communities rebuild after this latest natural disaster.

The grant program would provide up to \$20 million administered through the state's Empire State Development Corporation to help with physical flood-related damage. Grant recipients could receive up to \$15,500 for owners of residences, \$30,000 for owners of multiple dwellings, \$50,000 for small businesses and farms, and \$100,000 for not-for-profit corporations for damage not covered under insurance or an existing local, state, or federal program.

Municipalities and special districts would be eligible for a total of \$20 million in grants - up to \$1 million each - for infrastructure spending caused by the flooding and high water levels and not already covered under existing funding programs. This could include roads, bridges and other transportation systems, drinking water supply systems, sanitary and/or storm sewer systems, levy and/or flood protection systems, and other municipal equipment. For

other municipal costs that may not be eligible for that funding, an additional \$10 million in grants would be made available by the state.

Counties would be eligible for a total of \$5 million in new grants for flood mitigation or flood control projects costing at least \$250,000, up to \$500,000, and related to the recent high water levels.

(Attn. photo editors: Senator Ritchie is seen in the attached photo with Village of Alexandria Bay Deputy Mayor Mark Reynolds surveying flooding in the village)