



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Ritchie Delivers \$350,000 To Help Protect Fort Drum

PATTY RITCHIE August 15, 2017



State Senator Patty Ritchie is announcing she has delivered \$350,000 to help strengthen Fort Drum and protect the installation from potential cuts.

Funding announced Tuesday is part of a "Base Retention" grant Senator Ritchie successfully secured in the most recent state budget. This investment will support efforts by local organizations to bolster Fort Drum—which is home to 16,000 soldiers and families and is the state's largest single-site employer—and the connection between military and civilian communities.

“The troops and families who are stationed at Fort Drum are defenders of our freedom and the installation is an economic engine that isn’t just important to the region—but to all of New York State,” said Senator Patty Ritchie. “I’m pleased to secure this vital funding, which will help to ensure the post remains part of the North Country for generations to come.”

Funding secured by Senator Ritchie is being awarded to:

-\$300,000 to help the Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization (FDRLO) be better positioned to defend Fort Drum in the event of another round of federal defense cuts;

-\$50,000 for the Development Authority of the North Country to continue to provide municipal planning programs and services related to Fort Drum development

“The Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization works every day to strengthen the special bond that exists between the installation and its civilian neighbors,” said Brian Ashley, Executive Director of the Fort Drum Regional Liaison Organization. “Thank you to Senator Ritchie for recognizing how important this effort is, and helping to put our organization in a position to better advocate for the future of the post.”

“It goes without saying that Fort Drum has brought tremendous growth to our region and with that growth has come new challenges—and opportunities—for local municipalities,” said Jim Wright, Executive Director of the Development Authority of the North Country. “Through these funds, DANC can continue to assist communities with projects that could impact the installation and ensure that municipalities and Fort Drum are working together toward the common goal of protecting the post.”

Senator Ritchie played a key role in the creation of the Military Base Retention Fund in the State Budget, which was established in 2012. Since that time, it has funded a number of Fort Drum-related causes, including enhancing health care services benefitting troops and

families, helping to purchase critical equipment for fire departments and first responders that serve Fort Drum and surrounding communities and expanding "buffer areas" around the post's perimeter to prevent overdevelopment near key training areas, among other needs.