



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Chris Jacobs

## Jacobs Convenes Great Lakes Roundtable

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(Buffalo, NY) – Twenty-five public and private leaders from sixteen municipal and environmental organizations convened at the Frank Lloyd Wright Fontana Boathouse today to share ideas and discuss strategies on how to improve water safety and quality, and reduce beach closures in communities across Western New York.

New York State Senator Chris Jacobs (60<sup>th</sup> SD) brought the entities together at his first Great Lakes Roundtable. Jacobs said his goal in organizing the roundtable was to encourage more discussion of problems common to waterfront communities in his district, and to facilitate a

more collaborative approach to identifying and implementing potential solutions.

“The 60<sup>th</sup> Senate District is bordered by more than 43 miles of waterfront, and that presents both challenges and opportunities,” Senator Jacobs said. “Our waterfront holds great recreational and economic development potential, and we must ensure we are environmentally responsible in our pursuit of both,” Jacobs added.

One primary area of focus during the group discussion was waterfront revitalization. Municipal leaders detailed various waterfront revitalization efforts either planned or underway in their communities, both commercial and environmental in nature.

Water infrastructure, specifically storm and sanitary sewers as well as wastewater treatment facilities, was also an important topic of conversation. Aging infrastructure has long been identified as a source of overflows across the region, contributing to contamination and unsanitary water quality conditions that caused an unusually high number of beach closures this past summer. City and town officials were able to speak directly to state agencies that could play pivotal roles and provide much needed assistance in addressing these infrastructure needs.

“Whether it was municipalities jointly seeking coordinated investment in watershed projects or agencies seeking to improve their ability to test water in real time, the ideas exchanged were varied and the collaborative discussion benefitted everyone in attendance,” said Senator Jacobs. “I think the Great Lakes Roundtable and the entities participating will help inform our policy decisions and enable us to pursue actions related to our water that will vastly improve outcomes for our Western New York community,” the Senator added.

City of Tonawanda Mayor Rick Davis participated in the roundtable and reported on the City’s progress to date in year five of a ten-year plan to safeguard city sanitary sewers from

storm water infiltration. Davis also thought the roundtable was valuable for attendees and posted the following on his Facebook page:

“Thank you to Senator Jacobs for organizing this meeting and getting all the players together to discuss things we can do collaboratively for our Waterfront.”