



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'Mara, legislative colleagues holding second public hearing to examine Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River flooding: O'Mara and Helming will host government colleagues and water experts in Wayne County on Thursday (Webcast will begin at 4:00 PM)

THOMAS F. O'MARA November 6, 2017

| ISSUE: **FLOODING**



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Geneva, N.Y., November 6—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats), Chair of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee, will join Senator Pam Helming (R,C,I-Lyons) and Assemblyman Bob Oaks (R,C-Macedon) to conduct a public hearing later this week in Wayne County to examine the impacts of rising water levels on local businesses and homeowners.

The hearing will take place from 4 to 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 9 at the Wayne Central Performing Arts Center, 6200 Ontario Center Road, Ontario Center. The public is invited and encouraged to attend. A webcast will be available [HERE](#).

O'Mara said, "Throughout the Great Lakes region, we have seen the toll record flooding has taken on our shoreline communities. Homeowners and local businesses are still recovering. Funding through the Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence Seaway Flood Relief and Recovery Grant Program is a giant step in assisting the recovery and rebuilding effort, and I've appreciated the opportunity to work with Senator Helming, Assemblyman Oaks and our legislative colleagues to fight for it. But, it remains critical to keep hearing from stakeholders and regulatory bodies to understand what happened and why and to examine the actions needed to try to make sure it never happens again. This hearing will continue to provide that platform."

Helming said, "Many residents and business owners have called the shoreline their home for decades and this was the first time they've experienced flooding of this severity. I saw firsthand the devastation that local homeowners and businesses experienced. Their stories inspired me to lead the fight in Albany to get them the resources they need to recover. The newly-established Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence Seaway Flood Relief and Recovery Grant Program, which I fought to enact, will help to bring much-needed financial assistance to those affected by the historic flooding. Now, the real work begins. As communities start to rebuild and prepare for the long term, we owe it to our residents and business owners to examine this year's flooding from every angle and do all we can to prevent this from

happening again.”

Oaks said, “I want to thank Senator Helming and Senator O’Mara for bringing the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee hearing on the water level of Lake Ontario to Wayne Central School in the Town of Ontario. We need to collect critical information to help establish the best course of action to protect Lake Ontario south shore property owners from devastating flooding in the future.”

Oral testimony will be made by invitation only. Written testimony will be accepted that evening and can also be emailed to helming@nysenate.gov or mailed to Helming's office, 425 Exchange St., Geneva, NY 14456.

The hearing comes in the wake of the flooding disaster along the southern shore of Lake Ontario earlier this year and follows a similar public hearing that **O’Mara hosted with Senator Patty Ritchie (R,C-Heuvelton) in early October in the Town of Mexico in Oswego County.**

Helming, O’Mara, and Oaks will hear from stakeholders about their experiences with Plan 2014 and its impacts on local communities. They will also discuss government programs intended to assist local residents in recovering from the flooding. Those invited to present include members of the International Joint Commission, the Commissioner of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, state, county, and local elected officials, and local business owners and property owners.