



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pamela Helming

## Sen. Helming Announces Septic System Rebate To Keep Finger Lakes Clean

[JONATHAN MONFILETTO - 315-568-9816](#) December 6, 2017

GENEVA – Senator Pam Helming today announced that the six counties that she represents are included in the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation’s septic system rebate program. This fund allows property owners in eligible areas to be reimbursed for up to 50 percent of the costs for certain septic system projects up to \$10,000. Senator Helming fought for this funding in this year’s New York State budget and worked aggressively to ensure that the counties she represents were eligible.

The participating counties and eligible bodies of water in the Wayne-Finger Lakes region are as follows: Cayuga County - Cayuga Lake and Owasco Lake; Monroe County - Irondequoit Bay, minor tributaries, and Shipbuilders Creek; Ontario County - Canandaigua Lake and Seneca Lake; Seneca County - Cayuga Lake and Seneca Lake; Tompkins County - Cayuga Lake; and Wayne County - Lake Ontario and Blind Sodus Bay. Only septic system projects located on primary or principal groundwater aquifers or within 250 feet of the bodies of water that are failing or reasonably likely to be failing are eligible to participate in the program.

“This is a big win for our region! Clean lakes are essential to making sure that our families can lead healthy, productive lives and that our small businesses can continue to drive the

economy of our region and our state. This septic system rebate program will accomplish that by providing qualifying property owners with the resources they need to make the repairs and upgrades necessary to prevent unhealthy discharges to our lakes. It will also allow our communities to keep protecting our precious Finger Lakes and other bodies of water that are crucial to both our local tourism industry and our environment. I was proud to strongly advocate for all of the counties that I represent. To achieve this important funding is a big win for our region. I am glad that our upstate communities and our residents will be able to benefit from this program. I strongly encourage homeowners who are interested in participating to contact their county Soil and Water Conservation Districts,” Senator Helming said.

Cayuga County Legislature Chairman Keith Batman said, “The Cayuga County Septic Inspection rules and program is a model that provides regular inspection of every system in our county. The rebate program will make funding support available when problems are uncovered and correction needed and is a critical additional component to ensuring that problems with the treatment and containment of human waste do not contribute to water quality issues.”

Ontario County Board of Supervisors Chairman Jack Marren said, “I applaud Senator Pam Helming for championing this initiative. The Senator has been and will continue to lead the fight to protect our fresh water sources. The septic system rebate program is an opportunity to continue to achieve that mission. I encourage all eligible residents to pursue this opportunity and work with our Senator to preserve our clean water sources.”

Seneca County Board of Supervisors Chairman Robert Shipley said, “Seneca County sits right between two of the major Finger Lakes, and it is the home to numerous wineries, breweries, and other venues that rely on the lakes to draw in customers. It is important that we do everything we can to protect and preserve these bodies of water so that we can

continue to boost our local economy with a vibrant tourism and beverage industry. It is equally critical that we provide for the health and safety of our residents and our businesses by ensuring that they have a clean water supply. This septic system rebate program will achieve both of those goals. I thank Senator Helming for her leadership and advocacy to make sure that Seneca County could be included in this funding opportunity, and I thank her for her continued support of all of the communities that she represents.”

Tompkins County Legislator Michael Sigler said, “What to do with sewage never has much fanfare attached to it, but it’s one of the most critical infrastructure improvements that can be undertaken. Senator Helming recognizes that getting rid of waste will not always be addressed by large municipal sewer projects and that many times, particularly for our rural communities, the burden will land on the individual homeowner. This legislation gives them a leg up in paying the costs that otherwise might be unaffordable, leaving these folks with ill-functioning septic systems that hurt the homeowner and their family and the surrounding environment. This program is designed for them.”

Eligible septic system projects include: the replacement of a cesspool with a septic system; the installation, replacement, or upgrade of a septic system or septic system components; the installation of enhanced treatment to significantly reduce environmental and public health impacts. Seasonal or secondary homes are not eligible for this program.

Participating counties will determine the eligibility of projects. The participating county determines the project’s grant award based on the program criteria and the property’s location in relation to a body of water, impacts to groundwater used as drinking water, and the condition of the property owner’s current septic system. This funding is being targeted to geographic areas within participating counties that contain groundwater supplies and surface water drinking water supplies and other threatened or impaired surface waters where septic systems and cesspools are known or suspected to be adversely impacting the

body of water.

*Senator Helming represents the 54<sup>th</sup> Senate District, which consists of Seneca and Wayne Counties, parts of Cayuga and Ontario Counties, and the towns of Lansing and Webster. For more information, please visit Senator Helming's [website](#), or follow @SenatorHelming on Facebook or Twitter.*

###