



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Ritchie: Central and Northern New Yorkers Donate Nearly 700 Cell Phones to Connect Troops with Loved Ones

BRIAN DWYER January 19, 2018

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State Senator Patty Ritchie is announcing she has collected nearly 700 cell phones that will be delivered to soldiers deployed in combat areas overseas, as part of the 'Cell Phones for Soldiers' program.

“Our troops make tremendous sacrifices to keep us safe, including being away from loved ones for long periods of time,” said Senator Patty Ritchie.

“To see so many people stop by my offices and donate a phone—or in some cases, several phones—and give those soldiers another opportunity to connect with their loved ones, is heartwarming. I want to thank everyone who participated in this program and especially our heroes who, every single day, are putting their lives on the line for us.”

‘Cell Phones for Soldiers’ is a non-profit organization that recycles gently used cell phones and provides free calling cards to soldiers and veterans. Since 2004, the program has provided more than 300,000,000 minutes of free talk time to men and women in uniform. In Senator Ritchie’s District, individuals, businesses, community organizations, church groups and more, donated phones.

In addition, a senior at Massena High School, Mikka Baxter, organized a drive at the school that led to her fellow students getting involved and donating several boxes of phones for the program.

In addition to cell phones, Senator Ritchie also recently took part in the ‘Christmas Cards for Our Troops’ program, and through the generosity of local people, she collected over 10,000 greeting cards which were a part of the overall 200,000 cards that were delivered to troops and veterans across the globe this year.

*(In the above photograph, Senator Ritchie is pictured with Vietnam Veteran Bob Flavin and cell phones collected for the program.)*