



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

## Ortt Requests Investigation into Broadband Program

ROBERT G. ORTT May 9, 2018

| ISSUE: **BROADBAND, RURAL COMMUNITIES, TRANSPARENCY AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY**

Today, Senator Rob Ortt (R,C,I,Ref-North Tonawanda) announced his formal request for an investigation into the state's broadband program. The New York "Broadband for All" Program has come under immense criticism from Sen. Ortt as the plan's goal to deliver high-speed internet to all New Yorkers has not been achieved. This failure by the governor and his program comes on the heels of a \$500 million investment by New York State taxpayers and an additional \$170 million from the Federal Communications Commission.

"The public deserves to know why this plan has failed and what the state is doing to rectify these failures," said Sen. Ortt. "With \$670 million available to connect New York's residents, there is no excuse for individuals to be left out of this initiative, which is why I have called for an investigation into the New York State Broadband Program. The public deserves to know what is going on."

To complement his call for an investigation into the state's broadband program, Sen. Ortt has also introduced legislation (S.8286) that would require yearly financial reports from the New York State Broadband Program Office, documenting how any new funding for the program is spent. This legislation would also be retroactive, requiring a detailed report on what and where the broadband program's initial \$670 million was used.

“The program has yet to meet its goal of connecting every New Yorker and it lacks the safeguards of detailed reporting, which would allow us to hold the Broadband Program Office responsible for the initiative’s current status,” said Ortt. “The public has the right to know how and where their hard-earned tax dollars are being spent, and in the interest of accountability and transparency, this legislation would help do that.”

Sen. Ortt’s legislation has been advanced to the Senate’s Finance Committee, where he hopes the bill will be voted on and moved to the floor in time to be passed before the end of session in next month.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### **2017-S8286**

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- Introduced
  
- ◦ In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
  
- ◦ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
  
- ◦ Passed Assembly

- Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Requires financial reports from the New York state broadband program office

April 26, 2018

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by **Robert G. Ort**

Do you support this bill?