



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Ritchie Supports Future of Jefferson County Emergency Services

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State Senator Patty Ritchie has secured \$285,000 in state funding to strengthen emergency services in communities that help protect not only their residents, but also those living and working on Fort Drum.

The funding will help departments in Jefferson County update their emergency vehicles, as well as purchase lifesaving equipment, training apparatus and more.

“In an emergency, every second counts. Our fire departments and emergency medical services need the proper training and reliable equipment to successfully answer the calls they receive from their community,” said Senator Ritchie. “I am pleased to be able to deliver this funding to several area fire departments, emergency service providers and ambulance services which provide public safety to local residents and also the heroic men and women who serve on Fort Drum and their families.”

Funding, which comes from the state budget’s “Military Base Retention Fund,” is being awarded as follows:

The Jefferson County Firefighters Association: \$150,000 to renovate its burn building and car fire simulator. This will allow emergency service providers from throughout the county to improve and increase training, which results in better public protection.

“Our area’s volunteer firefighters are amazing people who have a special willingness to do whatever it takes to help protect people and property,” Jefferson County Firefighters Association President Larry Girard said. “The best way we, as a community can thank them is to ensure they have the best possible training and equipment so they are able to make it home to their families after every call, and that is exactly what Senator Ritchie is doing by providing us this funding.”

Northpole Fire Company: \$75,000 to help with the purchase of quick response/squad apparatus to allow the department to respond to smaller scale/non-fire emergencies and protect their larger fire truck from wear and tear that will shorten its lifespan.

"The members of the Northpole Fire Company are so grateful to Senator Ritchie for helping us with this grant," said Joe Wargo, Chief of the Northpole Fire Company. "Our department serves a community which includes a significant number of Fort Drum soldiers and families

and with Senator Ritchie's gracious assistance, we can continue to provide critical firefighting services in our area."

The Town of Watertown Ambulance Service: \$30,000 to help cover the cost of a cardiac monitor.

"We cannot thank Senator Ritchie enough for securing the funds for us to update one of our cardiac monitors, which will save the lives of many people," said Scott Lennox, Director of Operations, Town of Watertown Ambulance. "Her help is truly appreciated by the Town of Watertown area and surrounding communities."

The Carthage-Wilna Fire District: \$30,000 to help purchase a Utility Task Vehicle (UTV), which enables volunteers to travel to locations that larger emergency vehicles cannot access, such as woods and ATV and snowmobile trails.

"On behalf of the Carthage-Wilna Fire District and our neighboring communities we would like to extend our deepest gratitude to Senator Ritchie for securing the state grant providing us the ability to purchase a UTV and trailer," said Linda Prashaw Secretary-Treasurer of the Carthage-Wilna Fire District.

Established in 2012, Senator Ritchie played a key role in the creation of the state's "Military Base Retention Fund." Since that time, it has funded a number of Fort Drum-related causes, including enhancing health care services benefiting troops and families and expanding "buffer areas" around the post's perimeter to prevent overdevelopment near key training areas, among other needs.