



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Statement From Senator Patty Ritchie

PATTY RITCHIE May 17, 2019



I am pleased that Governor Cuomo has decided the five prisons I represent in Jefferson and St. Lawrence Counties will be kept open.

Our correctional facilities are among the safest and most efficient in our state. They are critical to the communities in which they exist, and our region as a whole. Not only do they play an important role in the safety of our state, they also support thousands of local jobs that hardworking families depend on—and our region can't afford to lose.

I would like to thank the many men and women who in the weeks leading up to this decision spoke up in defense of the North Country's correctional facilities, including the nearly 8,000 who signed my "Protect Our Prisons Petition."

In addition, I would also like to express my deepest thanks to the administration for recognizing that when New York State and New York City were facing a crisis in the 1980s—and downstate communities were turning their back on caring for their own residents and family members—the North Country stepped up to help by welcoming these prisons into St. Lawrence and Jefferson Counties. I appreciate the Governor recognizing the importance of these facilities to our region, and the critical role they play in the safety of our state.

Over the past 40 years, residents of St. Lawrence and Jefferson Counties have worked as dedicated correctional officers and prison staff members, putting their lives on the line to protect the people of New York. I am pleased that they will be able to continue the important work they do and look forward to continuing to advocate for measures that keep them safe as they serve our state.