



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

Ortt Seeks Damage Payments From Feds

ROBERT G. ORTT May 28, 2019

| ISSUE: **LAKE ONTARIO FLOODING**

Recently, Senator Rob Ortt (R,C,I,Ref-North Tonawanda) sent a letter to New York State's Attorney General, Letitia James, requesting a lawsuit be filed against the federal government on behalf of the property owners along Lake Ontario's shoreline. The spring and summer of 2017 saw record-high water levels in Lake Ontario and the implementation of Plan 2014 by the International Joint Commission (IJC), which led to widespread flooding and damages to New York State homes, businesses, and infrastructure along the Lake's southern and eastern shores.

Although New York State appropriated \$90 million for recovery efforts for the residents, businesses, and municipalities affected, recovery assistance from federal emergency agencies has been nearly non-existent.

"During the 2018 legislative session, my colleagues and I set aside \$90 million to assist the residents and property owners impacted by the flooding of Lake Ontario," said Sen. Ortt. "This was a massive commitment by New York State to help fix a problem caused by the IJC and the implementation of Plan 2014. The federal government must take the blame for the damage the IJC has caused and assist the State of New York in recovery efforts. The IJC is responsible for Plan 2014, so the onus of assisting New York residents impacted by the flooding shouldn't fall solely on the State of New York, but the federal government as well."

Since the U.S. Federal Government signed off on the IJC's Plan 2014 three years ago, Lake Ontario has experienced flooding in two of them. Not only has this affected the homes and businesses of New York State residents, but flooding has also posed a significant risk to local infrastructure and tourism.

"The IJC's implementation of Plan 2014 continues to wreak havoc on the Lake Ontario's shorelines. Given the Attorney General's interest in constantly suing the federal government, this seems like an idea she would support. I look forward to Attorney General James taking up this request and going to work for the residents and taxpayers along New York's shores of Lake Ontario."

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