



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Walczyk, Ritchie and Blankenbush Discuss Water Levels with IJC Chair

BRIAN DWYER January 3, 2020

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Assembly Member Mark Walczyk, along with State Senator Patty Ritchie and Assembly Member Ken Blankenbush met with International Joint Commission Chair Jane Corwin in Watertown Friday at a special meeting held to discuss the impact flooding has had on local communities along the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario.

The meeting also included Canadian officials, a representative from the Army Corps of Engineers and elected officials from Jefferson and St. Lawrence Counties. During the meeting, attendees were given the opportunity to share how flooding has affected the areas they represent and Commissioner Corwin answered a variety of questions regarding Plan 2014, potential future flooding and resiliency efforts, among other topics.

“I was encouraged that Chairwoman Jane Corwin accepted my invitation to sit down with officials from Jefferson and St. Lawrence County to discuss Plan 2014 and the crippling impact it’s having on those that live and work in the North Country, but also our environment,” said Assemblyman Mark Walczyk.

“The openness from Chair Corwin was refreshing and with a very serious threat of another flood event later this spring, it is critical that we are working together towards common sense solutions to help mitigate future damage. Sincere thanks to Senator Ritchie for her continued advocacy on this issue. I look forward to working alongside her and other stakeholders to fortify our shoreline communities and them a great place to live, work and raise a family for years to come.”

“Along the shores of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River, countless people have either had their property severely damaged or completely destroyed by record high water,” said Senator Ritchie.

“We need to take steps now to do all we can to prevent any future devastation. Meeting with those in charge of regulating our water levels is an important part of that process and I appreciate Commissioner Corwin visiting the North Country today to answer questions and discuss this critically important issue. I am hopeful the Commissioner will share the details of today’s meeting with her IJC colleagues and that they will consider changes that can be made before flood waters overtake our shorelines once again.”

“I appreciate my former colleague, International Joint Commission Co-Chairwoman Jane Corwin, traveling to our area to discuss ongoing Lake Ontario flooding concerns. Many residents in our region have been affected by Lake Ontario’s water levels. It is vital that we work together to ensure that our communities are more resilient to flooding,” Assemblyman Ken Blankenbush added.

“As a community, it’s important to have an open and transparent conversation. I feel very encouraged from the discussion today with fellow elected representatives.”

Commissioner Corwin shared with meeting attendees that the IJC would be hosting webinars in the future to better connect people with information pertaining to water levels and what to expect in the future. Additionally, she noted that the IJC’s Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Adaptive Management (GLAM) Committee has issued a questionnaire that will allow shoreline property owners to share how high water levels have affected them. The survey can be found via the following website: [www.ijc.org/en/glam](http://www.ijc.org/en/glam).

You can watch the video of Friday's meeting by clicking [here](#).

*(In the attached photo, Senator Ritchie is pictured during Friday’s meeting featuring International Joint Commission Chair Jane Corwin, Assembly Members Mark Walczyk and Ken Blankenbush and other elected officials)*