



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

## Griffo introduces legislation to help ski areas

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO March 9, 2023

| ISSUE: **SKI**; **SALES TAX**

As the ski season continues, New York State Sen. Joseph Griffo, R-C-Rome, announced today that he has introduced legislation that would provide a financial boost to certain recreational ski facilities in the state.

While the three state-owned ski centers - Belleayre, Gore, and Whiteface - are exempt from the state sales tax, privately-owned ski areas are not. This has created an unfair business environment for these privately-owned ski areas, many of which are located in Upstate New York.

Sen. Griffo's bill (S5523) would help these privately-owned facilities by eliminating the sales tax on the purchase of qualifying energy efficient lift, snowmaking and grooming equipment.

New equipment that can transport skiers with less energy and manpower than previously required is now available. While grooming equipment is powered by diesel fuel, advancements in technology have made newer machines much more energy efficient with less emission and more horsepower.

When it comes to making snow, the fuel, gas, electricity and refrigeration used for its production would be exempt from the state sales tax, as well as energy efficient equipment,

as a result of Sen. Griffo's legislation. The manufacture of snow is not eligible for a tax exemption under the definition of manufacturing because snow is not sold as a product. However, the climate and business environment has changed in such a way that ski areas must make snow to remain viable in the industry.

Wisconsin, Minnesota, Utah and Colorado have enacted similar laws that apply not only to the purchase of new energy efficient equipment but also for the use and compensating tax on snowmaking energy.

Sen. Griffo also urging the governor to incorporate his legislation into her spending plan, which must be approved by April 1.

"New York State is home to many ski centers that attract visitors, support local and regional economies and are an important part of the communities in which they are located," **Sen. Griffo said.** "In order to ensure their long-term sustainability, many privately-owned ski areas in New York, especially upstate, need to upgrade and maintain equipment and snowmaking systems. However, they may not be able to do so due to a variety of reasons, including financial constraints. My legislation will help these facilities by providing them with important relief that will help them to flourish for years to come."

"New York State is home to over 50 ski areas, more than any other state in the nation," **said Scott Brandi, president of Ski Areas of New York Inc.** "We have a \$1.4 billion impact on the tourism economy of Upstate New York during the four months of winter when we need tourism the most. We support Sen. Griffo's efforts in sponsoring this bill. We agree with his position specific to this bill. Snowmaking is a process that should not be subject to these taxes."

###

