

Senator Pam Helming

Representing the 54th New York Senate District



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Helming Announces Senate Budget Resolution Rejects Governor's Erie Canal Plan *Governor's plan would hurt local canal communities and economy, Helming says*

Senator Pam Helming led her colleagues in the Senate and Assembly to oppose changes to the New York State Canal System proposed by Governor Cuomo in his 30-day budget amendments. His proposal, the "New York State Canal System Revitalization Act," would eliminate the Canal Recreationway Commission that has helped govern state policy on the canal for nearly three decades. Helming announced today that the Senate's budget resolution rejects the Governor's proposal.

"The Senate has rightfully rejected the Governor's Canal proposal and I will continue to fight against his misguided plan," said Senator Helming. "During this milestone bicentennial period of the Erie Canal, it is more important than ever that we preserve and protect its economic impact on our local canal communities and businesses. To propose an overhaul of the Canal under the cover of a '30-day amendment,' with no opportunity for public input, is irresponsible and a slight to canal towns and villages across upstate New York."

Helming added further concern that under the Governor's plan, members of the proposed new canal governing board would be chosen only by the Governor and Democratic legislative leaders, leaving out the Minority which represents a number of canal communities. Helming recently introduced a bill (S.5059) in the Senate that would require equitable appointments to legislatively-enacted commissions and other working groups.

"The Canal is critical for the continued growth of our regional economies, tourism and recreation. Any discussions about its future should be done with full transparency and ample public engagement," Senator Helming added.

The letter from Senator Helming and her colleagues advocating that the Governor's plan be rejected is attached.

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