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STATE OF NEW YORK



SENATOR PATTY RITCHIE
48TH DISTRICT
OSWEGO, JEFFERSON, ST. LAWRENCE COUNTIES

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RESOURCES

March 9, 2022

Mr. John Petrilla
Environmental Branch Chief, Acting
Border Patrol & Air and Marine PMO
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
24000 Avila Road, Suite 5020
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Dear Mr. Petrilla:

I write today regarding the proposal for a new U.S. Customs and Border Protection Patrol Station on Blind Bay in Fisher's Landing, which is located in the Town of Orleans, New York. As the representative of this area in the New York State Senate, in recent weeks, I have heard from a significant number of constituents who are concerned about the impact this potential facility would have on Blind Bay and the St. Lawrence River as a whole.

Many of those opposed to this proposed location have raised concerns about the impact it will have on the local environment. As you may know, Blind Bay is one of the most prolific muskellunge—or "muskie"—spawning areas in the St. Lawrence River. St. Lawrence River muskellunge have experienced a significant and recent decline due to losses associated with viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS). Disrupting this spawning area could have a disastrous impact on the resurging muskie population, as well as more than 50 other species, including small and largemouth bass.

Additionally, others have also expressed economical concerns. As you are aware, the St. Lawrence River is a major tourist draw. The proposed station would be located directly across from historic Thousand Islands Park, a place that features hundreds of vacation homes, eateries, a hotel and other amenities enjoyed by tourists, as well as residents. An industrial-appearing station in such close proximity would detract from the natural beauty of the area that so many visit our region to enjoy.

While I understand the need to replace a facility that has outlived its usefulness, I believe alternate locations for a new station should be considered. Thank you in advance for your reviewing my concerns, as well as the concerns of the many individuals who have contacted my office on this important issue. Should you require further information, or have questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patty Ritchie". The signature is stylized with large, overlapping loops.

Patty Ritchie
State Senator

PAR:svc