



## Speaking To The House: Paul Ryan In Saratoga

Written by Thomas Dimopoulos



SARATOGA SPRINGS — A select group of area Republicans gathered Monday afternoon at the Gideon Putnam hotel where House Speaker Paul Ryan spoke to well-wishers, answered questions for about 45 minutes and endorsed Elise Stefanik’s campaign for re-election to the 21st Congressional District. Among the approximately 115 GOP supporters who attended the event, 13-year-old Kenny Kakaty was likely the youngest. “Mr. Ryan talked about the vision of the Republican Party at present and for the future. It wasn’t just what we’re against, or what they’re for, but it was pro-ideas. He said that’s how our party should speak, what we stand for,” Kakaty said. Ryan (R-Wis.), spoke about issues crafted as the House GOP’s election-year agenda, introduced in late June and dubbed “A Better Way.” The plan lists policy areas related to poverty, healthcare, and other issues. He spoke of the importance of well-negotiated trade agreements to build a strong economy, but was critical of specific trade deals conducted by the Obama Administration, said Saratoga County GOP Chairman John Herrick. Ryan also warned of the impact a Hillary Clinton Supreme Court would look like, and shared with the audience how the landscape he viewed of upstate New York flying in for the event reminded him of his native Wisconsin, Herrick added. “Paul Ryan is a good speaker, no pun intended, because he’s speaker of the House,” Kakaty said. “It was very inspiring. Mr. Ryan gave an informative speech with statistics. I really enjoyed it. “One part was about how this is the 51st year since ‘The War on Poverty,’ and that we are at the same place today we were then. Trillions of dollars have been spent and no progress has been made,” said the 13-year-old, referencing “The War on Poverty,” declared by then-President Lyndon B. Johnson in the 1960s. “I came away from that speech with adrenaline. It felt intimate and real,” said Kakaty, who area residents may know as the young, blues-loving guitarist who can be seen regularly performing around Saratoga Springs. His specialty is performing the national anthem, which he plays for local crowds at Little League baseball games. Earlier this year, Kakaty performed in front of more than 10,000 people at the Conservative Political Action Conference in Maryland. Stefanik, (R-Willsboro), spoke as well and stressed her support of Fort Drum against potential defense department cuts, citing the base’s importance of maintaining a strong national security, and of its economic standing as a major employer in New York State.

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