



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Ritchie Bill to Boost Riding Stables WINS Gov's Ok

PATTY RITCHIE August 4, 2011

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State Senator Patty Ritchie today announced that her bill that boosts riding stables and other “commercial equine operations,” which will also translate to more business for farmers and suppliers, was signed into law by Gov. Cuomo.

The new law allows operators to qualify for agricultural assessments and other benefits that are extended to more traditional farms and horse boarding facilities.

“This new law boosts the horse industry by recognizing its growing importance and popularity and, as a result, helps other farmers and small businesses that provide the feed, grain and other supplies to horse owners, riders and enthusiasts,” said Sen. Ritchie.

The new law applies to operations of at least seven acres, with 10 or more horses, and sales of at least \$10,000 annually, who will now be eligible for agricultural exemptions and ag district protections.

“More than 12,000 New Yorkers are employed by horse-related businesses,” Senator Ritchie said. “As Senate Agriculture Committee Chair, I am working to encourage the growth of small businesses, help farmers expand their operations, create new opportunities for farming and agriculture-related business, and help support and create jobs.

“This one new law accomplishes all of those goals, and I want to thank the Governor for recognizing the importance of our agriculture to our efforts to grow New York’s economy.”

Riding stables and other horse-related operations have been around for years, but have enjoyed a revival in popularity and numbers recently. The USDA counted more than 50,000 horses in New York in its 2007 Census of Agriculture—fifth in the nation—but experts estimate that only about half are used in commercial operations, like riding lessons. Still that number is growing.

“In rural and suburban areas alike, horse farms and horse businesses are growing, as more and more New Yorkers are learning to enjoy these wonderful animals for recreation, education and fun,” Senator Ritchie said.

Other states that have recently amended their laws to encourage horse businesses include Arizona and New Jersey.

Sen. Ritchie’s bill, S.5168, was sponsored in the Assembly by Agriculture Committee Chair William Magee.