



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Ritchie's 'Let New York Farm' Bill Passes Ag Committee

PATTY RITCHIE March 6, 2012

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Comprehensive, Bipartisan Bill is Top Priority of Farm Advocates

State Senator Patty Ritchie announced that her bill—the “Let New York Farm Act”—which cuts taxes, fees and needless red tape on hardworking farmers and is the top priority of the state’s farm community, won unanimous approval from the Senate Agriculture Committee today.

The bipartisan measure, which already has 16 co-sponsors in the Senate, and 48 in the Assembly, was approved 10-0, in a committee meeting that was attended by farmers from Jefferson, Oswego and St. Lawrence Counties, and sent to the Finance Committee for further action.

The bill is the Farm Bureau’s Number One priority, and Senator Ritchie today invited every member of the Agriculture Committee to join as sponsors.

“New York’s family farms are key to the economic revival of Upstate New York,” said Senator Ritchie, who chairs the Agriculture Committee. “But farming is the most overregulated industry in our state, and farmers need relief to help their businesses grow, and create jobs.”

“This bill, which was drafted with the help of the New York Farm Bureau, and based on concerns of real farmers who attended my agriculture forums held across the state last Fall, is the most comprehensive,

pro-farm measure to be considered by the legislature in years,” Senator Ritchie said. “It’s pro-farm, and pro-jobs, and it will help strengthen our rural and farm communities across the state.”

The bill would:

- Require uniform treatment for all property located in an proposed agricultural district;
- Extend investment tax credits, currently available to growing businesses, to farms and horse boarding operations to help them expand;
- Exempt farm wineries from onerous sales tax reporting requirements;
- Extend certain business tax filing deadlines for farm and agricultural operations;
- Reduce registration fees on vehicles and trailers registered to farmers in the Hudson Valley and Long Island, who already face higher operating costs;
- Roll back recent increases in registration fees on all farm vehicles;
- Replace current sliding scale of environmental regulatory fees for farm and winery operations to a single flat fee.

The bill is sponsored in the Assembly by Assemblyman Bill Magee