



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

Read the Fall 2012 edition of 'Rural Futures'

THOMAS F. O'MARA October 3, 2012

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Albany, N.Y., October 3—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R-C, Big Flats), who serves as one of 10 state legislators on the joint, 10-member bipartisan Legislative Commission on Rural Resources, said today that the commission's Fall 2012 edition of *Rural Futures* is "a valuable resource for local officials and concerned citizens looking to stay updated on the commission's work and other state and national rural affairs initiatives."

O'Mara said that the commission periodically publishes *Rural Futures* as an informative roundup of rural affairs in New York and nationally, including updates on legislative efforts and initiatives in rural communities, as well as summaries for rural leaders and officials on grants, publications, useful websites and upcoming events.

The latest, Fall 2012 issue includes updates on:

- new, rural-related state laws approved during the 2012 legislative session, including an increase in the reimbursement cap for Soil and Water Conservation Districts statewide (Chapter 316 of the Laws of 2012);
- projects and other initiatives to encourage economic development and job creation in rural regions, including an overview of the state's first-ever "Yogurt Summit" at the Capitol in August;
- the trend of increasing numbers of state farmers using manure-based technology to generate electricity;
- the Allegany/Western Steuben Rural Health Network and additional telemedicine efforts underway across New York; and
- a new publication from the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Development Office titled "Federal Resources for Sustainable Rural Communities." The publication's billed as a guidebook for rural community leaders to federal resources that can assist their efforts to "promote economic competitiveness, protect healthy environments, modernize infrastructure and provide services."

"This edition of 'Rural Futures' is once again full of rural affairs news, information and updates," said O'Mara, whose 53rd Senate District is comprised of Chemung, Schuyler,

Steuben and Yates counties, and a portion of Tompkins County. "It's a valuable resource for local officials and concerned citizens looking to stay updated on the commission's work and other state and national rural affairs initiatives. It's also an important tool for the commission to keep raising awareness of many of the short- and long-term challenges facing New York's rural communities and regions. The commission has long been noted as a voice of rural New York within the state Legislature."

O'Mara's was appointed to the commission in 2011. Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton (D-Ithaca) and Assemblyman Phil Palmesano (R,C-Corning) are also members of the commission, which is currently chaired by western New York Senator Catharine Young (R-Olean).

The commission, commonly known as the Rural Resources Commission, was established by the Legislature three decades ago in 1982. It was established to examine the impact of rural communities and industries on the state economy; review existing state laws and regulations impacting rural regions; assess the effectiveness of state programs and services affecting the needs and problems of rural areas; and develop recommendations for the Legislature to enhance and protect New York's rural resources. It's comprised of 10 members – five from the Assembly, and five senators.

Approximately 44 of New York's 62 counties are designated as rural, including all of the counties O'Mara represents, and the Commission has worked on a range of issues including agriculture, economic development, universal broadband, education, land use, transportation, local government structure and functions, volunteer recruitment and retention, and health care.

Read the full Fall 2012 edition of *Rural Futures*, attached below. To find previous edition, [click here](#).