



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Cecilia Tkaczyk

## Senator Tkaczyk Introduces Legislation to Create Jobs, Help Small Businesses and Farms

CECILIA TKACZYK April 10, 2013

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State Senator Cecilia Tkaczyk today announced a package of economic development bills that would help small businesses and farms grow, create new jobs and spur the local economy.

“Our rural communities and small Upstate cities are not getting the support they need, and many of the unique challenges facing our local businesses are not being addressed,” Tkaczyk

said. “The cornerstones of my legislative package would help small businesses by expanding Broadband Internet service, and would also support the small and medium farms that contribute so much to the Upstate economy.”

### **EXPANDING BROADBAND**

“Broadband is an absolutely crucial component of our modern-day business infrastructure. It is essential for job creation and economic growth,” Senator Tkaczyk said. “Unfortunately, it is not readily available at an affordable price in many portions of Upstate New York, particularly in rural areas. My bill would encourage broadband service providers to invest in rural areas that are currently underserved.”

**The Broadband Internet Access Act of 2013 (S4523)** would expand High Speed Internet service in rural, underserved, and unserved areas by awarding tax credits to companies that install new broadband service.

Senator Tkaczyk noted that in addition to being an important component for job growth, Broadband is also an increasingly important educational tool, allowing for distance learning and preparing students for the modern job market. But schools in many of New York’s rural areas cannot effectively utilize distance learning because of a lack of broadband.

“To have thriving rural communities, you need good schools that parents want to send their kids to,” she said. “Any investments we make in bringing broadband to rural areas will be good for our schools, good for the business community, and will lay the groundwork for long-term economic development and job growth.”

**Jim Clark, President of Clark Home Respiratory Supply** in Catskill, said, “Without sufficient broadband service, new technological advances will be unavailable to many of the businesses and residents of Upstate New York, creating a huge disadvantage. Expanding

broadband as proposed by Senator Tkaczyk would help Upstate businesses to better serve our clients, and to grow and create new jobs.”

### **HELPING SMALL FARMS**

Senator Tkaczyk’s legislation also recognizes the critical role agriculture plays in the Upstate economy -- sales of agricultural goods in New York were nearly \$4.5 billion in 2007. When you add in all the processing and supporting industries, agriculture generates more than \$31 billion of economic activity every year. Senator Tkaczyk’s measures would support Upstate agriculture by helping small farms to modernize their equipment and address cash flow shortages caused by natural disasters.

Senator Tkaczyk called for the creation of **The Small Farm Modernization Revolving Loan Fund (S4520)** which would provide low interest loans of up to \$25,000 to help small farms modernize, purchase new equipment, or expand the amount of crops planted.

Additionally, **The Small Farm Disaster Recovery Grant Program (S4521)** would provide grants of up to \$10,000 to small farm owners to purchase and replant crops that have been destroyed by a natural disaster.

Senator Tkaczyk, who was born and raised on a dairy farm and today owns a small sheep farm, said “Farming is hard work, and small farmers in particular sometimes need support and a little good luck to succeed. Modernizing equipment can mean success for a small farm, whereas a storm or flood can mean devastation and failure. My proposed grant and loan funds will help more small farms succeed, grow, create new jobs and help to stimulate the local economy.”

**Kaari Stannard, President of New York Apple Sales, Inc.**, said “Local farms are the backbone of the Upstate economy, but extreme weather conditions and flooding have caused severe

hardships for small farms in recent years. The loan fund and grant program proposed by Senator Tkaczyk would help small farms that need to upgrade their equipment or recover from a natural disaster, and that's very good news for Upstate Agriculture. "

Senator Tkaczyk concluded by saying, "The legislative package I am proposing will bolster entrepreneurship and educational opportunities and help small businesses and farms increase productivity. These are common sense measures that we can enact with little cost and with a great return on our investment."

Senator Tkaczyk has also co-sponsored the following rural economic development legislation introduced by her colleagues in the Senate:

**S2153 VALESKY, TKACZYK** – Prohibits extra charges on farmers for electric service and prohibits limitations on farmers installing and operating on-site electric generation equipment and related technology.

**S4118 MAZIARZ, TKACZYK** – Establishes statewide green jobs development and recruitment strategy and creates tax credit incentives to attract green jobs.

**S2083 YOUNG, BONACIC, TKACZYK** – provides that excess investment tax credit amounts may be refundable to operators of a farm.

**S2249 YOUNG, BONACIC, RANZENHOFER, SEWARD, TKACZYK** – establishes a working farmland property tax credit for owners of agricultural assessment land within agricultural districts.

**S3910 YOUNG, RANZENHOFER, TKACZYK** – creates a real property tax exemption for land of a farm operation which is in the process of being certified for the production of organic crops.