



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terry Gipson

## Working for our farming community

TERRY GIPSON March 19, 2014

I was raised in a farming community, and understand the importance of our local farms, and the role agriculture plays in our economy and daily lives. That is why I am proud to be the Ranking Member on the New York State Senate's Agriculture Committee and to represent an area with a rich history of family farms.

In my first year of office, I was humbled to be recognized by the Farm Bureau as part of their annual "Circle of Friends." With all that happens in the State Capitol, I wanted to be sure to keep you abreast of my efforts on agriculture issues. I value other's input greatly in my decision making process, and have found that my visits to local farms and meetings with farmers have proven very helpful in best representing their needs.

Here are highlights of some of the agricultural work my office has been doing in my first 15 months in office.

- Introduced legislation, S1952 that would establish a farm vehicle tax credit for farmers transporting their products on the New York State Thruway.
- Co-sponsored legislation, S.1952, which was signed into law, that reduces the cap placed on annual agricultural land assessment from ten percent to two percent, resulting in an 80

percent reduction of possible property tax increases.

- Introduced the “Local Food, Farms, and Jobs Act,” S5410, that would set goals for how much produce state agencies purchase from local farms. It would also create the NYS Council on Food Policy to better connect the state government and local farms to help promote their products, expand production and cut regulations that put family farms at a disadvantage.
- Led the fight during the 2013/14 budget process to reach a bi-partisan compromise to accelerate the phase-out of the 18a utility tax. Farms are one the highest payers of this tax and I continue to advocated for it’s immediate and full repeal.
- Introduced legislation, S.5522, which would provide tax credits against income and corporation franchise taxes in the amount of fifty percent of the value of the easement property and create a new incentive for conservation, preservation of open space and farmland protection.
- Co-sponsored legislation, S.2192, that aims to remove the restrictions on bulk milk haulers that have devastating effects on New York's dairy operations ability to continue their important role of delivering Upstate New York farm milk to consumers through stores, schools, medical facilities and other institutions in New York City and Long Island.

- Co-sponsored, S.2146, which directs the commissioner of agriculture and markets to establish a Dine: Pride of New York program for restaurants that use ingredients produced in New York state.
  
- Co-sponsored, S3806c, which was signed into law, that increases the size of solar units that can be deployed to farm operations with residential meters, leading to more on-farm renewable generation and therefore lower utility bills and more investment capital for farmers by expanding ability to get paid for energy generation.