



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## CHEERS! RITCHIE BILL TO BOOST CRAFT BEVERAGE INDUSTRY PASSES SENATE

PATTY RITCHIE March 1, 2016

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State Senator Patty Ritchie has announced her legislation to boost business for craft beverage producers by allowing them to more easily cross-promote their beverages has passed the Senate.

While current law allows farm breweries to sell beer or cider, it does not allow them to sell farm wine or spirits. Similarly, while the law allows farm wineries to sell wine or spirits, they

cannot sell beer or cider. Under Senator Ritchie's measure (S.5707), farm breweries would be permitted to sell wine and spirits, and beer and cider would be able to be sold at farm wineries.

"The popularity of our state's craft breweries, wineries and distilleries has skyrocketed in recent years and as a result they have helped not only to grow our state's agriculture industry, but also have created jobs and boosted our overall economy," said Senator Ritchie, who chairs the Senate Agriculture Committee.

"When people visit a farm brewery or winery, odds are they're also interested in other similar, locally made beverages that aren't made on site. This legislation would expand markets for producers and as a result, encourage the continued growth of these thriving industries."

Today, New York's wine and grape industry generates more than \$4.8 billion annually for New York State, and includes nearly 1,700 family vineyards, as well as more than 400 wineries—up from just 14 wineries in New York State in 1976. There's been growth when it comes to distilleries too, with the number of farm distilleries increasing by more than 25 percent in the past year.

New York's craft beer sector has also seen tremendous growth, with the number of craft breweries more than doubling from 2012 to 2015. Overall, the craft beer industry has a \$3.5 billion economic impact on New York State annually. In addition, New York has harnessed the power of one of its biggest crops—apples—to expand our state's cider industry. Today, there are more than 50 operating cideries in New York state, including 16 farm cideries, 19 cider producers and 16 farm wineries that also make cider.

The bill was sent to the Assembly, where it is sponsored by Chair of the Assembly Agriculture Committee Assemblyman William Magee.

