



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Grape Discovery Center Could Soon Be Able To Sell Local Wines, Expanding The Region's Grape-Based Economy

CATHARINE YOUNG June 10, 2016

| ISSUE: **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SMALL BUSINESS, AGRICULTURE**

ALBANY – A visit to Westfield’s Grape Discovery Center meant that you could sample the region’s wide array of excellent wines. But there was just one catch – you couldn’t buy a bottle of the wine you tasted to take home. That glitch has been corrected, thanks to [legislation](#) sponsored and passed by Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I- 57th District) and Assemblyman Andy Goodell (R,C,I- Jamestown) that grants the center a farm winery license so that bottles of local New York wine can be purchased for home consumption.

Stretching along the shore of Lake Erie from Silver Creek, New York, to Harborcreek, Pennsylvania, the Lake Erie Wine Trail includes 30,000 vineyard acres, 25 world-class wineries, and the Grape Discovery Center.

The Grape Discovery Center, located in Westfield and operated by the Concord Grape Belt Heritage Association Inc., a non-profit organization of grape growers, processors, related grape industry businesses and regional organizations, educates the public on the area’s agriculture history and supports Chautauqua County’s important grape industry.

“Wine and grapes are a cornerstone industry in Chautauqua County. We are one of the largest grape-growing regions outside of California, and tourism from our world-class

vineyards is a leading contributor to our region's economy," said Senator Young.

"The Grape Discovery Center has done an excellent job educating visitors on local grape history, which dates back 150 years, while also serving as a platform to promote our regions renowned wines. By allowing the center to qualify for a farm winery license they will be able further grow their outreach initiatives, and do an even better job promoting local small businesses," said Senator Young.

"When people tasted our great local wines at the Grape Discovery Center, many of them wanted to buy a bottle to take home," noted Goodell. "Surprisingly, the liquor license for the Grape Discovery Center allowed for taste testing but not for the purchase of any wine, leaving many tourists amazed and frustrated with our inability to sell New York wines at the regional tasting center."

"Fortunately, we were able to obtain overwhelming bi-partisan support in both the Senate and the Assembly to correct this glaring problem," said Goodell. "Yesterday, the Assembly followed the lead of the Senate and unanimously adopted this legislation, sending it to Governor Cuomo for signature."

Helen Baran, Past President and Board member for the Grape Discovery Center, said, "The Grape Discovery Center is very grateful for the efforts of Senator Young and Assemblyman Goodell in getting this legislation passed. It will allow the center to conduct business as the Canandaigua Culinary Arts Center does, and to continue to cooperate with the area wineries to promote and enhance the Lake Erie Wine Country, and all of the wineries in our region. We look forward to being able to serve people and to further promote this great grape growing and wine making area."

Allowing the Grape Discovery Center to have a farm winery license will now permit residents and tourists alike the opportunity to buy New York wines and wine products by the bottle so they can be shared with friends and neighbors who might then be inspired to visit the Grape Discovery Center and the region's wineries.

Chautauqua County's grape harvest accounts for approximately 65 percent of New York State's total annual grape harvest. A 2007 study found that the Concord Grape Belt supports over 1,900 jobs and contributes over \$340 million to the region's economy.

In 2013, Senator Young and Assemblyman Goodell helped cut the ribbon for the Grape Discovery Center in Westfield. Senator Young secured a \$1.3 million grant for the facility, which includes a gift shop, an outdoor patio area and educational exhibits.

RELATED LEGISLATION

2015-S5049

- Introduced

- ◦ In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate

- ◦ On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate

- ○ Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
-

Directs the state liquor authority to issue a farm winery license to the Concord Grape Belt Heritage Association Inc. Grape Discovery Center in the town of Westfield, county of Chautauqua

April 29, 2015

Signed by Governor

Sponsored by **Catharine Young**

Do you support this bill?