



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Bonacic

## Senator Bonacic Supports Bills Enhancing New York's Agriculture Industry

JOHN J. BONACIC June 8, 2018



(Albany, NY)- State Senator John J. Bonacic (R/C/I-Mt. Hope) was pleased to support three bills yesterday that protect New York's family farmers and strengthen and preserve agriculture as one of the state's most important industries. The bills' passage coincides with the Legislature's annual "Agriculture Day" which brought nearly 30 local businesses from across the state to the Capitol to highlight products grown in New York.

The measures help support the agricultural workforce, invest in operations, and reduce costs and are part of the Senate Majority's "Growing Strong" plan unveiled earlier this year. The bills build upon the Senate's ongoing commitment to agriculture, including its role as the undisputed leader in restoring more than \$55 million in Executive Budget cuts since 2011. This funding has helped support investments in cutting-edge agricultural research, education for the next generation of family farmers, environmental stewardship, and protections for plant, animal, and public health.

The bill package would help further support the growth of agriculture in New York and create jobs by:

- **Doubling the existing Farm Workforce Retention Credit:** [S2905A](#), which would help farmers meet consumer demands with a strong and steady workforce. The bill would increase the Farm Workforce Retention Credit enacted in the 2017-18 budget to \$600 per eligible employee this year, and \$1,200 per farm employee when fully effective, saving farmers an estimated \$60 million when fully implemented;
- **Helping farmers invest in facilities and buy equipment:** [S7851](#); would provide a tax credit for dairy farmers to encourage investment in facilities and equipment that will allow them to take advantage of a growing demand for "value-added" dairy products, like flavored drinks, yogurts, and other products that can satisfy existing, wide demand, such as in growing ethnic minority communities within the state; and
- **Lessening the burden on small farm goods transportation:** [S890](#), would create a 10% discount on New York State Thruway tolls for trucks transporting food produced by farms. The legislation would help farmers struggling with rising costs by allowing single-unit trucks or other larger vehicles to transport food and other produce to grocery stores and dinner tables across the state at a lower cost.

“Agriculture is the backbone of our economy in New York State and I’m pleased to support these common-sense bills which will help our local farmers,” said Senator Bonacic. “Working with my colleagues in the Senate Republican Majority, we have continuously fought for more funding for family farms, and supported legislation making it easier for farmers to operate.”