



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pamela Helming

Sen. Helming's Bill to Increase Farm Machinery Speed Limit Becomes Law

SENATOR PAM HELMING January 8, 2019

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GENEVA – Senator Pam Helming today announced that legislation she sponsored to increase the speed at which farm vehicles may be operated on roadways has been signed into law. This legislation (S.6746) does not change the requirement that a slow moving vehicle emblem be displayed on all farm machinery, whether self-propelled or towed, but updates Vehicle and Traffic Law to allow farmers to drive their equipment at 35 mph instead of the current 25 mph limit. Increasing the speed at which farm machinery can operate on roadways improves the overall safety of farmers and motorists. Passing this legislation has been a priority for the New York State Farm Bureau.

“With agriculture being the top industry in our region and a major economic driver throughout New York State, it is important that we continue to support our hardworking, job-creating farmers in any way that we can. This bill to increase the speed limit at which farmers can operate their machinery on roadways is a critical part of that support and I was proud to work with Farm Bureau to get it signed into law. This measure improves safety for our farmers and motorists alike. As technologies change, we must update our regulations to reflect those improvements and this is a perfect example of a commonsense regulatory fix. Working together, we can continue to push for legislation that improves public safety and

supports the continued success of local farms,” Senator Helming said.

“The new slow moving vehicle law for farm equipment will make it easier for farmers to travel from field to field while also taking advantage of modern upgrades to their machinery. It is also an important reminder that safety remains a priority on farms. We encourage the public to not only heed the warning of the slow moving vehicle emblem, but recognize the need to be careful when approaching and passing farm vehicles on rural roads. We appreciate Senator Helming’s sponsorship of the bill to update the regulation and her support of the hard working farm families in her district and around the state,” said David Fisher, New York Farm Bureau President.

Prior to this legislation, state law required the slow moving emblem to be displayed on agricultural equipment designed to operate at 25 mph or less when traveling on public highways. However, many modern tractors and other agricultural equipment is designed to travel at speeds above 25 miles per hour and sometimes even greater than 35 miles per hour. Senator Helming’s legislation will still require the slow moving vehicle emblem to be displayed on all farm machinery, whether self-propelled or towed, but will increase the speed at which the machinery could travel. The slow-moving vehicle emblem alerts other drivers that the vehicle is traveling at a reduced speed and tells them to use caution when driving behind the machinery. One of the major causes of accidents with farm equipment is motorists failing to adequately react and respond when driving around farm equipment. Motorists often do not anticipate how slow farm equipment travels and therefore do not start to slow their vehicle as they approach the slow moving vehicle.