



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

## Deputy Minority Leader Griffo and New York City Council Member Koslowitz: Reconsider proposed chocolate milk ban in city schools

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO September 24, 2019

| ISSUE: **DAIRY FARMERS, DAIRY INDUSTRY, DAIRY FARMS**



UTICA – New York State Senate Deputy Minority Leader Joseph Griffo, R-I-C-Rome, and New York City Council Member Karen Koslowitz today called for the New York City Department of Education to reconsider imposing a ban on chocolate and other flavored milks in New York City schools.

The request comes after recent reports indicated that the department, citing health concerns, was considering proposing such a ban.

The New York State Farm Bureau, New York dairy farmers, state Health Commissioner Howard Zucker and state Agriculture and Markets Commissioner Richard Ball, elected officials on both sides of the aisle and others have expressed concerns with the possible prohibition of flavored milk. These concerns have ranged from the potential impact a ban would have on the state's dairy community and the consequences of not providing options for students to consume essential nutrients such as vitamin D, calcium and potassium. Further, studies and research have shown that flavored milk is not connected to weight gain or additional sugar intake in children, according to the New York State Farm Bureau.

"I thank Council Member Koslowitz for being willing to consider and understand the potential negative consequences of this proposed ban," Deputy Minority Leader Griffo said. "While I understand the intent of the New York City Department of Education's proposal, I am worried about the harmful impact it could have on the state's hardworking dairy farmers. We have sadly seen too many dairy farms, many of which have been owned by the same family for generations, forced to close due to a myriad of financial pressures and stresses that they face that are often out of their control. I fear that this ban will make it more difficult for dairy farmers to be successful and thrive for years to come."

Following discussions with Deputy Minority Leader Griffo, Council Member Koslowitz said she would request that the council's Committee on Health and Committee on Education review the proposed ban on flavored milk.

"In speaking with Deputy Minority Leader Griffo I have renewed concerns with the Department of Education's proposal to ban chocolate milk in New York City schools." Council Member Koslowitz said. "While providing healthy, nutritious meals for our children must be an imperative, I do not believe banning chocolate milk furthers this goal. Because so

many of our 1.1 million students choose chocolate milk over its non-flavored alternative, I fear that if chocolate milk is banned our students will miss out on the essential nutrients that milk provides. I ask that the Chancellor Carranza and the Department of Education reconsider the proposed ban on flavored milk in our schools.”