



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jen Metzger

Metzger Co-Chairs Virtual Legislative Hearing on Federal Assistance to Small Businesses and Farms

JEN METZGER May 20, 2020

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Hudson Valley and Catskills, NY... Senator Jen Metzger (SD-42) co-chaired the first-ever **joint hearing** of the State Legislature last week on the federal response to the economic impact of COVID-19 on small businesses across the state. In her role as Senate Agriculture Chair, Senator Metzger questioned the agricultural panel about small-farm assistance, potential expansion of Nourish NY and other state programs, and strengthening New York's regional food systems during the hearing's **federal assistance for farms** section.

“As testimony at the legislative hearing demonstrated, federal programs to help small businesses during this challenging time were designed to be one-size-fits-all, but farm businesses have unique needs that set them apart from other types of small businesses,” **said Senator Metzger.** “Some of the kinks were worked out in the second round of funding for small business loan programs to better support our farms, but much more needs to be done to bolster federal assistance to agriculture, including more robust direct payments and support for state programs, like Nourish NY, that support our farms while simultaneously addressing the growing food insecurity that many New Yorkers are experiencing.”

Co-hosted by 12 committee chairs from the New York State Assembly and Senate, including Metzger’s Agriculture Chair counterpart Donna Lupardo, the first-ever virtual hearing gave the Legislature an opportunity to address assistance provided or enhanced by the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) and related legislation.

“We are grateful to Senator Metzger, Assemblywoman Lupardo, and their colleagues for highlighting the impacts of COVID-19 on small businesses, including agriculture in New York State,” **said Jeff Williams, Director of Public Policy at New York Farm Bureau.** “It is clear that the legislature is concerned about the prospects for maintaining our agricultural and rural economies, while at the same time protecting our food supply. We look forward to working with Senator Metzger and Assemblywoman Lupardo to ensure that farms receive the critical support they need to survive this tough time.”

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