

Senator Pam Helming

Representing the 54th New York Senate District



Buying American Means Growing Jobs At Home

By Senator Pam Helming

For far too long, our state's infrastructure – airports, bridges, roads, and tunnels – has been paid for by our hard earned tax dollars, but built with materials and products imported from overseas. That is why I fought to pass the New York Buy American Act to bring manufacturing jobs back to upstate New York.

Imports of cheap iron ore and steel of potentially questionable quality are putting American companies at a competitive disadvantage. On major infrastructure projects across the state poor quality, imported steel was used, often having to be replaced soon after.

American companies and workers have continued to lose out on contracts and jobs to foreign companies. According to the Economic Policy Institute, American workers and the domestic economy have been devastated by the growth of the U.S. trade deficit with China. Between 2001 and 2011, more than 2.7 million U.S. jobs were lost or displaced. New York alone lost 158,000 jobs.

Addressing this issue and bringing our jobs home is a top priority of mine, and I know it is for many of you as well.

That is why earlier this year I fought to enact the New York Buy American Act, which requires state contracts of \$1 million or more to use American-made iron and steel. It also includes the creation of a workgroup to study the expansion of manufactured products to include American-made concrete, cement, and aluminum.

As the daughter and granddaughter of former U.S. Steel workers, supporting the New York Buy American Act was personal to me. It is about supporting American products, made by the American workers and companies. It promotes the production and use of American-made iron and steel. This ensures that New York's infrastructure projects will be built with materials that are safe and will stand the test of time. This important change will help drive job creation and economic development in upstate New York – not overseas.

We need a level playing field for American companies, one that not only relieves them of their competitive disadvantage but also stimulates an economic climate that puts American companies at a competitive advantage. We want our workers to know that when they are reconstructing our state's infrastructure they can do it proudly with American-made products. We want consumers to have the opportunity to purchase products stamped "Made in America."

The New York Buy American Act will help support American businesses, drive job creation, and ensures that our tax dollars will stay here in the United States. As State Senator, I will continue my efforts to support our local manufacturers and job creators as they work to level the playing field with foreign competitors.

Senator Helming represents the 54th Senate District, which consists of Seneca and Wayne Counties, parts of Cayuga and Ontario Counties, and the towns of Lansing and Webster. For more information, please visit Senator Helming's [website](#), or follow @SenatorHelming on Facebook or Twitter.

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