



New York Farm Bureau
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MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

Senate Bill 8362 (Senator Ritchie)

AN ACT TO AMEND THE AGRICULTURE AND MARKETS LAW, IN RELATION TO THE ACQUISITION OF AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION RESTRICTIONS

Date: 6/4/2018

New York Farm Bureau, the state's largest agricultural advocacy organization, would like to express its support for this legislation. This legislation would make affordability provisions in farmland protection plans eligible costs for state assistance payments.

New York farmers are facing increasingly tough times and one of the barriers to farming is finding affordable farmland. Conservation easements give farmers the opportunity to ensure that their farmland is not developed or sub-divided in the future. To ensure that farmland is affordable and sold to another farmer, a conservation easement needs to include affordability provisions, such as pre-emptive purchase rights. These affordability provisions are voluntary, and the farmer can choose whether to include them in the conservation easement.

Currently, the farmland protection program provides state assistance payments to approved farmland protection plans and conservation easements, but these payments may not be used for affordability provisions. By making affordability provisions eligible, farmland will be kept in agricultural production and affordable for the next generation of farmers. In order for New York to have a strong rural economy, it must include working farmland.

For these reasons, New York Farm Bureau respectfully requests your support of this legislation.