



New York Farm Bureau
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MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

Senate Bill 943 (Senator Funke) / Assembly Bill 3944 (Assemblyman Quart)

ESTABLISHES THE HEALTHY OPTIONS AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM

Date: 2/06/2017

New York Farm Bureau, the state's largest general agricultural advocacy organization, respectfully requests your support for this legislation. This bill would help convenience stores and small grocers across the state located in underserved and at-risk communities to begin offering healthy foods to their customers on a regular basis.

It is no secret that a lack of healthy, wholesome food options can lead to serious and chronic diseases that undermine the vitality of many of the communities in our state. In rural locations across the state and in many of our large cities, there is not access to grocery stores that supply local and healthy options and families would have to travel long distances for this opportunity. Instead, the food shopping option for some families may be a local convenience store. But these stores often don't have the coolers, storage facilities or shop owner knowledge to properly house and market healthy foods to their customers.

This bill would expand statewide a successful model program from New York City, which incentivizes stores to install any needed upgrades to be able to carry fresh fruits, vegetables and dairy products, while teaching owners the best way to display and market these products to consumers to the inventory stays fresh. This can lead to increased store sales, healthier consumers, and a new local market for farmers.

While this program would help New York farmers simply by offering new outlets for fresh produce and dairy products, New York Farm Bureau would further encourage the Commissioner of Agriculture, if this bill is enacted, to urge that stores participating in this program take advantage of local New York State products first, when feasible and in season.

For the benefits to at-risk communities across the state and to farmers, New York Farm Bureau requests your support of this legislation.