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FARM BUREAU AND LOCAL SMALL BUSINESSES UNITE IN APPEAL TO OPPOSE \$15 MINIMUM WAGE

Family farmers and small business owners joined together today at farms and businesses across New York to ask state lawmakers to oppose the proposed \$15 minimum wage increase. The April first budget deadline is just days away, and the coalition remains united in its efforts to defeat what would be a devastating blow to local employers. Farm Bureau's state and county leadership spearheaded the effort asking local business groups and chambers of commerce to join in and voice their concerns.

In all, 15 press conferences took place from Long Island to the North Country to Western New York. It is part of a final push by New York Farm Bureau to make the compelling point to lawmakers that there are serious consequences, from job loss to higher consumer prices, should New York pass a \$15 minimum wage. In addition, the organization has issued a call-to-action for members to contact their representatives in Albany and has also collected hundreds of postcards that will be delivered to legislative offices in Albany.

The consequences of a 67 percent minimum wage hike are far-reaching. The farmers and business owners shared their personal stories of what this will mean to each of them. A reduction in the number of employees and an increase in automation are inevitable should this proposal pass in Albany. Farmers also expressed how they are price takers, not price makers, competing in an open market place. Farmers in others states who have considerably lower labor and production costs would price New York's farmers out of the market.

A recent report conducted by the former director of the Congressional Budget Office found that at least 200,000 jobs will be lost across the state. A separate independent analysis by Farm Credit East estimates a \$15 minimum wage in New York State would cost farmers between \$387 and \$622 million in 2021 at the peak of the wage rollout, and nearly 2,000 farms would no longer be profitable. Businesses that can't make money don't stay in business. The farmers and small business owners asked their local lawmakers to vote no on this proposal.

"The \$15 minimum wage is one of the most serious threats to face the agricultural community in years. I am proud of our members and the leadership at every level of our great organization who

stood up today to make sure their voices are heard. We cannot sit idly by and watch as this proposal threatens to decimate family farms and small businesses across New York,” said Dean Norton, New York Farm Bureau President.

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New York Farm Bureau is the State’s largest agricultural lobbying/trade organization. Its members and the public know the organization as “The Voice of New York Agriculture.” New York Farm Bureau is dedicated to solving the economic and public policy issues challenging the agricultural community.