

NY FARM BUREAU STATEMENT ON GOV. CUOMO'S STATE OF THE STATE AND EXECUTIVE BUDGET

“Governor Andrew Cuomo is moving forward with some major budget proposals that will impact agriculture across the state in positive and negative ways. New York Farm Bureau has advocated on a host of issues mentioned in the State of the State, and many of the Governor’s requests reflect his interest to improving conditions for family farms across the state.

New York Farm Bureau is hopeful his efforts to substantially increase the Environmental Protection Fund will assist farmers with expanded water quality, conservation and farmland preservation programs that are widely used. In addition, his request to offer a 100% tax credit on Thruway tolls for farm vehicles that use EZ Pass is a sensible approach to helping farms save money while at the same time making it easier to move their products around New York. Improving rural infrastructure also remains a priority for New York Farm Bureau, and we are pleased to see additional funding as well to improve roads and bridges in the upstate and Long Island regions.

There is also support for agriculture reflected in funding for critical research. Plus, the Governor has maintained his commitment to marketing initiatives that let our neighbors and the world know about the healthy food and products that come from our farms.

Despite these positive endeavors, New York Farm Bureau remains deeply concerned about the impact of a \$15 minimum wage on our farms’ bottom lines. Many of our members tell us they will be forced to make tough choices should it pass, choices like reducing staff, changing what they grow and how they grow it, or just leaving farming altogether. We encourage Governor Cuomo to continue working with Farm Bureau to find better ways to promote job growth, better wages, and new opportunities for our family farms and their employees,” said New York Farm Bureau President Dean Norton.