



**New York Farm Bureau**  
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# MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

**Senate Bill 8171 (Senator Ritchie)**

**AN ACT TO AMEND THE AGRICULTURE AND MARKETS LAW, IN RELATION TO CERTAIN DEFINITIONS AND AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS AND ASSESSMENTS; AND TO AMEND THE REAL PROPERTY TAX LAW, IN RELATION TO THE FARM BUILDINGS TAX EXEMPTION AND AUTHORIZING FARMS TO CHALLENGE THE DENIAL OF AN AGRICULTURAL VALUE ASSESSMENT THROUGH THE SMALL CLAIMS ASSESSMENT REVIEW (SCAR) PROCESS**

**Date: 5/1/2018**

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New York Farm Bureau, the state's largest agricultural advocacy organization, respectfully requests your support of this legislation. This bill would modify agriculture and markets law to reflect changes and trends in the industry and better address the needs of farm policy in the 21st century.

This legislation would amend the law to allow farmers to qualify their land for an agricultural assessment in its first or second year of growing and selling a crop and eliminate the minimum acreage requirement to recognize the needs of smaller, higher value farms. In addition, the bill would make land used for processing or retail merchandising eligible for an agricultural assessment – a long time New York Farm Bureau priority.

We also applaud the language clarifying that the Department has the authority to investigate and compel compliance with the agricultural assessment provisions on behalf of qualified farms. New York Farm Bureau for many years has been seeking a final arbiter of these claims. The provision of additional protections for prime agricultural lands from the siting of above ground natural gas and electric line facilities is also critical to protect high value agricultural lands from being taken out of production.

New York Farm Bureau also strongly supports the new provisions to strengthen Real Property Tax law, section 483 in the bill.

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