MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

Assembly Bill 8977 (Assemblywoman Lupardo) / Senate Bill 6968 (Senator Metzger)

AN ACT TO AMEND THE AGRICULTURE AND MARKETS LAW, AND THE PUBLIC HEALTH LAW, IN RELATION TO HEMP, CANNABINOID HEMP, AND HEMP EXTRACT; AND TO REPEAL CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE AGRICULTURE AND MARKETS LAW RELATING THERETO

Date: 1/13/2020

New York Farm Bureau, the state's largest farm advocacy organization, requests your support for this chapter amendment. If enacted, this bill would establish a new regulatory framework to regulate hemp production, extraction and marketing within the state.

With the changes made in the federal 2018 Farm Bill, there is growing interest by farmers, processors and other investors who would like to enter into the business. Industrial hemp production can offer significant new economic opportunities for New York State’s agricultural industry, particularly now when many farms are struggling to remain successful in a global marketplace.

The bill transitions the Department of Agriculture’s permitting process for growers and will shift its current Research Pilot Program to a traditional licensing framework. The chapter amendment also moves the regulation of hemp processors who are making products derived from hemp for their cannabinoid (CBD) content, over to the Department of Health and requires retailers of these hemp extracts to obtain a license from the Department of Health.

Industrial hemp has many different uses, and the major market for industrial hemp is as a food or dietary supplement as it is rich in protein, Omega fatty acids, and has a high fiber content. Further, many take hemp extracts like CBD to treat a number of ailments and it is important that this is done in a way to ensure purity and safety to instill confidence in the marketplace. Hemp is also found in fabrics, building materials, plastic products, paper products and more.

This legislation would ensure that New York agriculture is positioned to take advantage of this expanded market as the new federal policy permit is implemented. For these reasons, New York Farm Bureau respectfully requests your support to this legislation.