



New York Farm Bureau
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MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

Senate Bill 5251-A (Senator Helming) / Assembly Bill 6910 (Assemblywoman Woerner)

RELATES TO PURCHASING ON BEHALF OF A SCHOOL DISTRICT OR A BOARD OF COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Date: 5/8/2017

New York Farm Bureau, the state's largest general farm organization, encourages you to support the above legislation. If enacted, this bill would make it easier for boards of cooperative educational services (BOCES) and municipalities to procure local farm products without the requirement of the formal and time-consuming procurement procedures. The bill further provides a cap on the amount of municipal money that may be spent without utilizing formal procurement procedures and provides protections against overpaying for these products.

This bill would extend to local governments an exemption to formal procurement procedures to purchase local food similar to those already in effect for state agencies and school districts. State agencies may already purchase up to \$200,000 for New York-produced food without formal procurement, and school districts can use a multiplier based on enrollment to purchase local food and milk. Currently, municipalities cannot purchase more than \$20,000 without going through formal procurement and this bill would change that cap to a multiplier based on population. This would also extend to BOCES the same conditions that school districts now benefit from when purchasing local food products. This change to the law would make it easier for local governments and BOCES to pair with farms to purchase products more directly, streamlining the process for all parties.

The purchase of local farm products not only benefits the local economy by helping to support farms and related businesses, but also can provide fresher products grown or raised to the specifications of the municipality or educational institution. This bill will make it easier to provide the quality of fresh, local products to the people fed in our local communities, contributing to positive long-term health outcomes and building relationships within the community.

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