



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michelle Hinchey

## Hinchey, Kelles Bill to Create Agrivoltaics Research Program at Cornell Signed into Law

MICHELLE HINCHEY January 2, 2024

| COMMITTEE: **AGRICULTURE**



Cutting-Edge Agrivoltaics Research Through Cornell CALS Will Provide Knowledge Base to Increase Food and Clean Energy Production in NYS

**KINGSTON, NY** – Senator Michelle Hinchey today announced that her bill with Assemblymember Anna Kelles ([S7081/A4911](#)) to establish an Agrivoltaics Research Program within Cornell University’s College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS) has been signed into law. Agrivoltaics is an emerging combination of technologies that maximize land use for both food cultivation and renewable energy production. Applied research is required to

identify the optimal design and installation of agrivoltaics across a range of conditions in New York State. Cornell CALS' Agrivoltaics Research Program will provide science-backed guidance on effectively co-locating a diverse range of crops with solar arrays, balancing the need for increased renewable energy and local food production.

Hinchey and Kelles secured \$1 million through the FY'24 budget to create the Agrivoltaics Research Program, which is set to begin at Cornell CALS in the spring.

**Senator Michelle Hinchey said,** “The path to solving the climate crisis requires expanding renewable energy projects to achieve our clean energy goals; however, this effort has historically harmed our local food supply, often taking prime farmland out of production and putting farms out of business. The new Agrivoltaics Research Program at Cornell CALS will help change this dynamic by pioneering strategies and technology to facilitate vital collaboration between the renewable energy and agriculture industries. This innovative approach holds promise for ensuring a stable local food supply while advancing our clean energy transition, and I thank Assemblymember Anna Kelles and Cornell CALS for their partnership in developing this science-based climate solution.”

**Assemblymember Anna Kelles said,** “Too often, agriculture and solar are competing for the best farmland, but this does not need to be the case. I’m proud that this law establishes a research program at Cornell University, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS), to develop science-based recommendations and best practices for the dual use of agricultural land so that farmers have more choice and flexibility while still maximizing agricultural productivity. I appreciate Governor Hochul signing the law to develop this important research and Senator Hinchey for her sponsorship in the Senate.”

**Dr. Benjamin Houlton, the Ronald P. Lynch Dean of the Cornell College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, said,**

“The Center for AgriVoltaics will leverage our extension networks and faculty expertise to create a dual-use economic opportunity for farmers, who are critical allies in meeting New York’s renewable energy goals. I’m grateful to Governor Hochul, Senator Michelle Hinchey, and Assemblymember Anna Kelles for their leadership in establishing this research center, which will pursue science-based solutions that generate co-benefits for rural communities, our state, and the planet.”

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### 2023-S7081

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- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Establishes an agrivoltaics research program

May 17, 2023

Signed by Governor

Sponsored by Michelle Hinchey

Do you support this bill?