



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

## Senator Young Woodlands Legislation to Protect Environment

CATHARINE YOUNG July 9, 2008

ALBANY – Legislation that clarifies the law allowing farmers to rightfully manage and harvest woodland lots in conjunction with their overall farm management plan, has passed both houses of the legislature and awaits consideration by Governor Paterson, Senator Catharine Young (R,I,C – Olean) has announced.

Senator Young’s initiative further defines that farm operations shall also include the production, management and harvesting of farm woodlands.

“Farmers across New York need the flexibility to diversify their agricultural activities in order to remain profitable and productive,” said Senator Young. “This legislation will help provide access to additional financial resources to ensure viable farm operations.”

Under current law, the first fifty acres of a timber plot on a farm operation is eligible for the agricultural assessment farm tax relief program, but the operation is not protected under law by the Department of Agriculture and Markets. Senator Young’s bill extends these full protections to farm woodlots.

“New York is home to millions of acres extremely productive crop land, environmentally unique wetlands, and beneficial woodlands which contribute to the strong future of agriculture and the preservation of the open space that we have all come to enjoy and appreciate,” the Senator said. “As part of that, we must continue to recognize the importance that our farmers play in not only feeding the state but also in protecting our environment through the agricultural districts law which provides, among other things, agricultural assessments and right-to-farm protections. This is even more important now as we seek to ensure the growth of renewable energy sources, a reduction in ozone depleting pollutants and an overall increase in our tree management practices.”