



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David J. Valesky

Senate Passes Valesky Bill that Supports Local Wineries, Allows Sale and Consumption at Food Festivals

DAVID J. VALESKY February 23, 2010

| ISSUE: **AGRICULTURE, RECREATION AND TOURISM, SMALL BUSINESS**

SYRACUSE, N.Y.--Supporting local and farm wineries, the New York State Senate has passed legislation (S5440B) sponsored by Senator David J. Valesky (D-Oneida) expanding the ability of wineries to sell wine for consumption at food festivals, significantly increasing the market for in-state producers.

"This bill is beneficial to two substantial components of New York State's tourism industry—wineries and food festivals," Senator Valesky, Vice President Pro-Tempore of the Senate, said. "New York wineries deserve showcasing, and by adding incentive to participate in festivals, it is a win for the wine industry, for festivals and for consumers."

Across New York, hundreds of food festivals draw attention to our agriculture industry and local products, providing social and economic benefits to the municipalities harboring the festivals. Allowing for additional New York products to be sold and enjoyed will further strengthen our state's wine and grape industry.

Currently, while wineries can technically sell their product at these events, consumption of alcohol on the premises is often not allowed. By allowing consumption, this legislation gives

wineries and farm wineries greater incentive and opportunity to participate in these events, as the sale of their products should increase.

“This is a very welcome bill for consumers and the wine industry, by making it convenient for festival-goers to enjoy their wines as they enjoy the festival,” said Jim Trezise, President of the New York Wine & Grape Foundation. “This approach has worked very effectively at the New York State Fair, and allowing it at other venues will be good for the wine industry and consumers. We greatly appreciate Senator Valesky’s leadership on this issue.”

The New York wine industry is a growing economic force in New York state. More than 200 functioning wineries and 1,000 family-owned vineyards from the Finger Lakes to Long Island produce 100 million bottles of wine annually. The industry employs 18,000 people statewide, and produces \$500 million in aggregate gross sales and \$85 million in state and local revenue annually.

For more information on food festivals and wineries in New York, visit www.iloveny.com and www.newyorkwines.org.

###