



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Senator Ritchie: Senate Stands Up for Maple Producers

PATTY RITCHIE March 24, 2011

Senate Recognizes Maple 'Sugar Shacks' As Farm Buildings; Honors Maple Industry

State Senator Patty Ritchie announced today the state Senate passed a bill she sponsored to make bureaucrats recognize maple sugar shacks as agricultural buildings. The bill aims to cut red tape that threatens the state's growing maple industry.

The Senate also passed a resolution, at the height of "sugaring season" throughout New York State, honoring the state's 550 maple producers whose efforts have made the Empire State the second largest maple producing state in the nation.

"When I became Senate Agriculture Committee Chair, I was shocked to discover that, in addition to battling late winter cold and waist-high snow drifts, New York's 550 maple producers were battling government bureaucrats who wanted to treat seasonal 'sugar shacks' like regular commercial buildings, subject to all sorts of expensive and difficult rules and regulations," Senator Ritchie said. "I told them I would make it one of the Senate Agriculture Committee's top priorities, and am glad to deliver on that promise today."

"When I was growing up, I can still remember my first visit to a 'sugar shack,'" Senator Ritchie said. "Throughout Central and Northern New York, visiting a 'sugar shack,' learning

how syrup is made, and enjoying the many other fine, natural maple products, has become a ritual of spring. This legislation ensures that these small business owners can continue to invite their customers to come and watch, learn and enjoy."

New York State Maple Producers Association Vice President Dwayne Hill, of Shaver-Hill Maple Farm of Harpersfield, praised the Senate passage of the bill.

"When we needed someone to stand up for New York's 550 Maple Producers, State Sen. Patty Ritchie led our campaign to reduce the red tape and end the mindless bureaucratic interference that was damaging our marketing efforts and crippling our family businesses."

The bill was sent to the Assembly for action.

[Click here for a list of locations for Maple Weekend events in Oswego and Jefferson Counties](#) . More information, including St. Lawrence County participants, can be found at the Maple Weekend website, www.mapleweekend.com.

A copy of the resolution is included:

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring the New York State maple producers for their success in making New York the second largest maple producing state in the nation.

WHEREAS, It is incumbent upon the people of the State of New York to recognize and acknowledge those within our midst who have made significant contributions to the quality of life within the state; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to honor the New York State maple producers for their success in making New York produced maple syrup the finest in the Nation; and

WHEREAS, The 2011 Maple Weekend is scheduled for March 19-20 and March 26-27, 2011 and participants can witness a variety of equipment and methods used to make maple syrup, sample a plethora of maple products, and enjoy wagon rides to the woods, tapping demonstrations, and historical displays at many locations; and

WHEREAS, More than 1,500 commercial maple producers have sugar bush operations which range in size from fewer than 100 taps to almost 30,000 taps; and

WHEREAS, Maple producers also sponsor public events at county fairs, the State Fair, and regional maple festivals; many sugar houses are open to the public during maple season as well as at other times of the year; and New York's maple producers are very proud of their accomplishments and are always willing to share their interest and knowledge; and

WHEREAS, In 2010, New York State's approximately 1,500 maple syrup producers made more than 312,000 gallons of syrup which recently moved New York into second place in production, with only Vermont producing more syrup, and New York borders Canada, the largest maple syrup producing country in the world; and

WHEREAS, The word is spreading about award-winning New York State maple syrup-+ and the 1.9 million taps in the state produce enough sap to account for almost 16% of the maple syrup made in the United States; and

WHEREAS, The New York State maple producers' distinguished record merits the recognition and respectful tribute of this Legislative Body; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor the New York State maple producers for their success in making New York produced maple syrup among the finest in the Nation; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the New York State Maple Producers.