



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Cecilia Tkaczyk

## Senator Tkaczyk Joins Montgomery County Officials to Discuss Job Creation and Economic Development

CECILIA TKACZYK April 18, 2013

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(AMSTERDAM, NY April 18) -- State Senator Cecilia Tkaczyk joined Montgomery County officials today to discuss a package of economic development bills that would help small businesses and farms grow, create new jobs and spur the local economy.

“Our rural communities and small Upstate cities are not getting the support they need, and many of the unique challenges facing our local businesses are not being addressed,” Tkaczyk

said. “The cornerstones of my legislative package would help small businesses by expanding Broadband Internet service, and would also support the small and medium farms that contribute so much to the Upstate economy.”

### **EXPANDING BROADBAND**

“Broadband is an absolutely crucial component of our modern-day business infrastructure. It is essential for job creation and economic growth,” Senator Tkaczyk said. “Unfortunately, it is not readily available at an affordable price in many portions of Upstate New York, particularly in rural areas. My bill would encourage broadband service providers to invest in rural areas that are currently underserved.”

**The Broadband Internet Access Act of 2013 (S4523)** would expand High Speed Internet service in rural, underserved, and unserved areas by awarding tax credits to companies that install new broadband service.

Senator Tkaczyk noted that in addition to being an important component for job growth, Broadband is also an increasingly important educational tool, allowing for distance learning and preparing students for the modern job market. But schools in many of New York’s rural areas cannot effectively utilize distance learning because of a lack of broadband.

“To have thriving rural communities, you need good schools that parents want to send their kids to,” she said. “Any investments we make in bringing broadband to rural areas will be good for our schools, good for the business community, and will lay the groundwork for long-term economic development and job growth.”

**Ken Rose, CEO of Montgomery County Business Development Center**, said, “We need sufficient broadband service in order to take full advantage of all the new technological advances available for small businesses, schools and families. Expanding broadband as proposed by

Senator Tkaczyk would help businesses in Montgomery County to grow, create new jobs and better serve their customers."

### **HELPING SMALL FARMS**

Senator Tkaczyk's legislation also recognizes the critical role agriculture plays in the Upstate economy -- sales of agricultural goods in New York were nearly \$4.5 billion in 2007. When you add in all the processing and supporting industries, agriculture generates more than \$31 billion of economic activity every year. Senator Tkaczyk's measures would support Upstate agriculture by helping small farms to modernize their equipment and address cash flow shortages caused by natural disasters.

Senator Tkaczyk called for the creation of **The Small Farm Modernization Revolving Loan Fund (S4520)** which would provide low interest loans of up to \$25,000 to help small farms modernize, purchase new equipment, or expand the amount of crops planted.

Additionally, **The Small Farm Disaster Recovery Grant Program (S4521)** would provide grants of up to \$10,000 to small farm owners to purchase and replant crops that have been destroyed by a natural disaster.

Senator Tkaczyk, who was born and raised on a dairy farm and today owns a small sheep farm, said "Farming is hard work, and small farmers in particular sometimes need support and a little good luck to succeed. Modernizing equipment can mean success for a small farm, whereas a storm or flood can mean devastation and failure. My proposed grant and loan funds will help more small farms succeed, grow, create new jobs and help to stimulate the local economy."

**Corey Nellis, Manager of the Montgomery County Soil and Water Conservation District**, said, "Small farms are an important part of the culture and economy of Montgomery County, but

the severe storms we've had in recent years have created hardships for many of our local farms. The loan fund and grant program proposed by Senator Tkaczyk would certainly help small farms that have been hit by a natural disaster, as well as those that want to modernize their equipment "

Senator Tkaczyk concluded by saying, "The legislative package I am proposing will bolster entrepreneurship and educational opportunities and help small businesses and farms increase productivity. These are common sense measures that we can enact with little cost and with a great return on our investment."