



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Betty Little

## Bill to ban feral swine passes Senate

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The State Senate today passed legislation sponsored by Senator Betty Little that would prohibit the importation and possession of Eurasian boar, otherwise known as feral swine.

Companion legislation is expected to be considered in the Assembly later this week. The legislation was introduced at the request of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).

“When we talk about invasive species, feral swine isn’t what comes to the minds of most people first, but these are very destructive animals that can cause a lot of problems and be very difficult to control,” said Senator Betty Little.

“Eurasian boar have been reported in a majority of upstate counties, including the North Country. They not only destroy natural landscape, but also agricultural lands and carry disease transmissible to humans and livestock and other animals. These are highly intelligent predators and we need a highly effective response.”

According to a 2012 USDA study on feral swine in New York, “breeding populations are thought to be a result of escaped swine from shooting preserves and breeding

facilities.” The removal of 35 boars in Clinton County cost the DEC and a division of the USDA \$68,000 or more than \$2,600 per animal.

The legislation (S.5733) would add a section to the Environmental Conservation Law providing a definition of "Eurasian boar" that specifically excludes domesticated pigs.

The proposed law would immediately prohibit the importation, breeding or release to the wild of Eurasian boar, prohibit the possession, sale, distribution or transportation of Eurasian boar effective on September 1, 2015, and authorize the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to adopt rules and regulations necessary to implement and administer this section.

Fines of \$500 would be imposed for the first and second violations of the law with penalties increasing to \$1,000 or more for subsequent violations.

Groups supporting the legislation include the Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York, the Nature Conservancy, Catskill Mountainkeeper and Humane Society.