



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Raising a Glass to the Future of New York's Craft Beer

PATTY RITCHIE October 20, 2017



When people think of Oktoberfest, most visualize a grand celebration in Germany. What began as an event held in 1810 to celebrate a royal wedding in Munich has grown into a worldwide celebration, marked by special festivals and gatherings in communities across the globe.

A big part of these celebrations is—you guessed it—craft beer. In recent years, the popularity of craft beer has skyrocketed. In fact, New York is currently fourth in the country when it comes to craft beer, producing over one-million barrels annually. These breweries are not

only “crafting” great taste, they also are supporting nearly 13,000 full-time jobs and generating \$4 billion for New York State’s economy annually. The popularity of craft beer has even led to the creation of the “New York State Beer Trail,” which covers our entire state and features several breweries in our region.

As Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, I have been working to encourage the growth of New York’s craft beverage sector. Part of my efforts include delivering funds that help our state’s breweries grow, create new jobs and boost our economy. In the most recent state budget, I was able to secure \$10,000 for the New York State Brewers Association, which assists breweries, microbreweries, farm breweries, brewpubs and other brewing-affiliated businesses.

In addition, I also secured \$200,000 in the state budget for Cornell University’s “Born, Bred and Brewed in New York Program.” This initiative assists farmers with growing a variety of ingredients essential to beer production, including hops and barley, as well as helps business owners meet the requirements for a “Farm Brewery License.” Established in 2013 through legislation I sponsored, the Farm Brewery License offers tax benefits and eased regulations for farm breweries using New York-grown ingredients.

I am looking forward to continuing to work to expand New York’s craft beer industry and in turn, attracting more visitors to breweries, creating jobs and boosting our state’s overall economy. The future of craft beer in New York State is something we can all responsibly raise a glass to—anytime of the year—but especially in October. Cheers!