



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Statement From Senator Patty Ritchie

BRIAN DWYER June 20, 2019

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While agriculture remains the backbone of New York State's economy, it is an industry in peril. New York agriculture is a \$4.8 billion industry with more than 35,000 farms across the state—but it is struggling. Over the last five years, we have lost 2,000 farms and today, almost every farmer I talk with is teetering on the brink of disaster.

In passing the "Farmworker Fair Labor Practices Act", New York State places the fate of its agricultural industry in the hands of a newly created, unelected wage board that has zero accountability. Moreover, the legislation has added another \$300 million to farm costs,

delivering what could be a fatal blow to many in an already dire industry.

Compared to what they provide for New York State, our hardworking farmers do not ask for much. They simply ask to be given the chance to earn their money and work their farms. They do not ask for government—especially those from non-agricultural based communities—to tell them they cannot. Our farms cannot afford this bill and because of it, I fear many will not survive.

(Video of Senator Ritchie speaking against the “Farmworker Fair Labor Practices Act” from the senate floor can be found on her Facebook page by clicking [here](#))