



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michelle Hinchey

Senator Hinchey Touts Productive First Session, Sponsors 43 Bills with Near-Unanimous Senate Support

MICHELLE HINCHEY June 16, 2021

| ISSUE: [HINCHEY END OF SESSION REVIEW](#)



ALBANY, NY – As one of the most active freshman members of the New York State Senate, 43 of Senator Michelle Hinchey's bills passed the Senate this year — 86% passing unanimously and 70% passing both houses of the State Legislature. Hinchey's legislative initiatives covered a diverse range of issues important to the communities she represents, from [addressing food insecurity](#) to [expanding life-saving emergency care in rural areas](#) to

helping municipalities transition their fleets to electric vehicles and combating Lyme and other tick-borne illnesses.

“I ran for office to be an upstate voice in Albany and to put the needs of SD-46 families, farmers, and small business owners front and center. My legislative initiatives and the bipartisan support they’ve garnered are a testament to the fact that we are delivering real progress in areas that have been left behind for too long,” said **Senator Michelle Hinchey**. “In my first six months in office, I’ve worked to close the broadband gap so that everyone, no matter where they live, has access to reliable, high-speed internet. I’ve fought to expand markets for our farmers while connecting more New Yorkers to healthy, locally-grown food. I’ve advanced key measures to support our first responders and help rural residents achieve better access to life-saving emergency services. And I’ve introduced a transformative bill to expand carbon capture on farms as a way to fight climate change. I’m incredibly proud of the work we’ve done for the people of SD-46 and all that we’ve been able to accomplish in such a short time. I look forward to a busy summer of on-the-ground work to ensure that we can continue to deliver for our upstate communities next session.”

EXPANDING BROADBAND ACCESS

A priority issue for Senator Hinchey is closing the broadband gap plaguing rural and upstate areas of New York, where thousands of the Senator’s constituents are going without reliable, high-speed internet. One of Hinchey’s most important bills was a measure to address cost and efficiency barriers that small broadband providers often face when attempting to extend broadband infrastructure into un-served and underserved areas. [Hinchey’s bill](#), which passed both houses of the State Legislature with wide bipartisan support, streamlines the contract process for [broadband expansion](#) projects and ensures that installation costs are fairly allocated between broadband service providers and utility pole owners.

DELIVERING ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRESS

A key bill championed by Senator Hinchey to address climate change and enlist farmers as partners in keeping our land, air, and water clean is the [Soil Health and Climate Resiliency Act](#). Hinchey's bill directs the Department of Agriculture and Markets to create a voluntary set of standards for soil health to help New York farmers adopt regenerative practices to increase farm productivity and reduce the severity of climate change. The bill, which passed both houses of the State Legislature unanimously, has earned the support of a [robust and diverse coalition](#) of environmental and agricultural organizations. Another bill sponsored by Hinchey [establishes the position of Catskill Park Coordinator](#) within the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). The Coordinator will serve as the central connector between all of the Park's stakeholders to ensure continued interaction to address natural resource and public access concerns throughout the Catskills region.

INCREASING MARKET OPPORTUNITIES FOR FARMERS

Senator Hinchey, who chairs the Senate Agriculture Committee and represents a district with over 1,000 small and mid-sized farms, is committed to supporting a strong and diversified agricultural economy with a focus on [expanding markets for farmers and keeping food dollars local](#). Recently, Hinchey's bill to create a [centralized database of New York farm businesses](#) and farm products passed both houses of the State Legislature unanimously. The effort, to be undertaken by the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, aims to connect the dots between New Yorkers who want to purchase New York-grown food and farm products and farmers looking to expand their customer base. Senator Hinchey also worked this session to address food insecurity in communities across New York while enabling farmers to take advantage of new market opportunities. One bill toward that end [makes the state's farm to food bank initiative, Nourish New York, a permanent state program](#), opening up a new sales channel for farmers while providing farm-fresh food to those experiencing

food insecurity.

IMPROVING RURAL HEALTH CARE

As the representative of the most rural district in the Democratic Majority Conference, where residents generally have fewer options for healthcare compared to their urban counterparts, Senator Hinchey has fought to address issues pertaining to emergent care access. This session, Hinchey sponsored and passed legislation to address the rural Emergency Medical Services (EMS) crisis in New York State, which has forced dozens of rural providers to close their doors while others continue to lose valuable employees. One bill carried by Hinchey, that received full approval from the State Legislature, creates the **New York State Rural Ambulance Services Task Force** to study the unique challenges facing EMS providers and identify long-term solutions to keep these services available to rural residents across New York State. Another bill carried by Hinchey, which passed the State Legislature unanimously this session, **amends an outdated state law that restricts air ambulance providers from carrying and distributing human blood products** to patients at the scene of an emergency. Hinchey's bill effectively overturns these rules and allows aeromedical crews to store blood products at their bases, carry and transfuse blood on flights, and donate unused blood to rural hospitals.

A complete list of the 43 bills sponsored by Senator Hinchey, which passed the State Senate this session, can be found below.

- **S4092-HINCHEY:** Increases rebates to municipalities for the cost of any eligible infrastructure projects which support the development of clean vehicles.
- **S4722A-HINCHEY:** Establishes the Soil Health and Climate Resiliency Act.

- **S6421-HINCHEY:** Establishes the position of Catskill Park Coordinator within the Department of Environmental Conservation.
- **S6469-HINCHEY:** Relates to conservation easement agreement exemptions for certain towns.
- **S4078-HINCHEY:** Establishes a geoparks task force to survey and formulate a plan for identifying sites for a system of geoparks and a management and development strategy.
- **S7071-HINCHEY:** Provides for the designation of geologically significant areas, territories, and sites throughout the state and for the establishment of a state geological trail.
- **S6332A-HINCHEY:** Provides that maximum dimension and weight limitations shall not apply to vehicles proceeding to and from a certain portion of the New York state thruway.
- **S7028-HINCHEY:** Relates to requirements for certain contracts for attachments to utility poles and the use of utility ducts, trenches, and conduits.
- **S6259A-HINCHEY:** Requires the Department of Transportation to issue a notice of completed application upon receipt and following an initial review of such application.
- **S6691-HINCHEY:** Makes provisions permanent relating to the one-call notification system; repealer.

- **S4085A-HINCHEY:** Relates to the availability of air transport ambulance service providers to store and distribute human blood and blood products and to initiate and administer transfusions of the same.
- **S3503C-HINCHEY:** Authorizes the Office of Fire Prevention and Control to establish the New York State Rural Ambulance Services Task Force.
- **S5506A-HINCHEY:** Relates to permitting all beds in hospice residences to be dually certified as both hospice and in-patient beds.
- **S5490B-HINCHEY:** Requires the Commissioner of Labor to provide notice to unemployment applicants of available rental, mortgage, food, and utility assistance programs.
- **S5973-HINCHEY:** Allows donate life registration on electronic applications administered by the Office of Temporary Disability Assistance, the Higher Education Services Corporation, and on mandatory electronic tax filings.
- **S6572-HINCHEY:** Relates to providing feminine hygiene products at no cost to menstruating individuals receiving temporary housing assistance.
- **S5199-HINCHEY:** Relates to analysis of data in the prescription monitoring program registry.

- **S3448-HINCHEY:** Relates to opioid overdose prevention in college housing.
- **S6571-HINCHEY:** Requires reporting of alcohol overdose data and makes opioid overdose reporting requirements permanent.
- **S4086-HINCHEY:** Authorizes gifts, on personal income tax returns, for substance use disorder education and recovery.
- **S4892A-HINCHEY:** Establishes the Nourish New York program.
- **S1305-HINCHEY:** Directs the Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets to work with the state's land grant university system to produce a report to provide recommendations on the state's farm and food supply.
- **S7111-HINCHEY:** Relates to bee health and the beekeeping industry; repealer.
- **S2135A-HINCHEY:** Relates to agricultural custom operators.
- **S4072-HINCHEY:** Establishes a one-stop farming hotline with the Cornell Cooperative Extension.
- **S5751-HINCHEY:** Regulates the manufacturing, sale, branding, and labeling of beech sugar and beech syrup.

- **S4089-HINCHEY:** Directs the Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets to develop and conduct a public awareness campaign regarding Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases.
- **S4082-HINCHEY:** Relates to eligibility under the New York State Young Farmers Loan Forgiveness Incentive Program.
- **S6256A-HINCHEY:** Relates to temporary manufacturing permits; repealer.
- **S6042-HINCHEY:** Relates to a tax credit and tax exemption for the rehabilitation of historic barns.
- **S6330A-HINCHEY:** Requires the Department of Agriculture and Markets to establish a database of New York state farms and farm products.
- **S6714-HINCHEY:** Relates to the import of dairy products and payment from the milk producers security fund.
- **S5438-HINCHEY:** Provides distillers with the same privileges currently enjoyed by other New York manufacturers.
- **S6713-HINCHEY:** Relates to animal response teams.
- **S6884-HINCHEY:** Relates to extending the authority of the Department of Environmental Conservation to adopt regulations for hunting in the northern zone.

- **S4081A-HINCHEY:** Relates to the inspection of certain vacated property for abandoned animals.
- **S5148-HINCHEY:** relation to a state flag for raising awareness of veteran suicide.
- **S4074-HINCHEY:** Relates to the designation of the "Ulster County Korean war veterans' Memorial Highway."
- **S4343-HINCHEY:** Authorizes the County of Ulster to offer an optional twenty-year retirement plan to certain deputy sheriffs employed by such county.
- **S1705A-HINCHEY:** Authorizes party designations and nominations for all elections to be made via video teleconference or web conference.
- **S4779-HINCHEY:** Authorizes Edward Tercasio, Jr. to receive certain credit under section 384-d of the retirement and social security law.
- **S7083A-HINCHEY:** Authorizes the increase of the number of town justices in the Town of Rotterdam, Schenectady County.
- **S7018A-HINCHEY:** Relates to authorizing the city of Schenectady, County of Schenectady, to alienate and discontinue the use of certain parklands.

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