



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mark Walczyk

Senator Mark Walczyk Vehemently Opposes Department of Labor Decision To Lower Overtime Threshold

MARK WALCZYK February 23, 2023

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Yesterday, the New York State Department of Labor gave final approval for a lower threshold for when farm workers will qualify for overtime pay in New York. This move is an absolute slap in the face to the hard working farm owners in Upstate New York and the 49th Senate District. This initiative puts large agricultural operations on an uneven playing field and may serve as a benchmark for the beginning of the end for small family farms. Additionally, these added expenditures are all but guaranteed to fall back on the consumer.

Farms are already finding themselves in the midst of severe working shortages with overtime being utilized at its current threshold. By lowering that number to 40 hours, costs to operate a farm are going to drastically increase along with the costs to put that food on your table.

This decision is also demoralizing for New Yorkers as this was an opportunity for New York State to prove to us that they are here to work in collaboration with our farms. Instead, they put forth a sham, pretending to listen to the concerns of farm owners and members of the Farm Bureau. Unelected New York State bureaucrats once again revealed their ugly hand by ramming their own policy down our throats while completely disregarding experts and farm owners who are consistently beaten down with regulations and bad policy.

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“Agriculture is the number one industry in New York State. Farmers have been burdened by labor shortages, crippling inflation, construction regulations, and as we saw yesterday, terrible policy out of Albany. What’s even more disheartening is in this case, upstate agriculture were told they’d have a seat at the table on the farm-labor legislation. Instead, Albany democrats again parade themselves as benevolent while shifting the cost onto others. In this instance, agricultural businesses and anyone who buys food will ultimately pay the price. I will continue to stand up for family farms in this state.”