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## **Senator Thomas O'Mara Named 'Eco-Star' For Environmental Efforts**

NEW YORK --- The New York League of Conservation Voters, which works to make environmental sustainability a top political and policy priority in New York State, has named Sen. Thomas O'Mara (R-53<sup>th</sup> District) a 2011 "Eco-Star" for his work on sustainability issues in Albany.

NYLCV's Eco-Star award is presented to those elected leaders who authored critical legislation, lobbied their colleagues and helped broker bipartisan, bicameral solutions to New York's many environmental and energy challenges. As a member of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee, Sen. O'Mara played a key role in setting the state's environmental budget and legislative agenda this year.

Of special note was Sen. O'Mara's effort to protect New York farms. In 2011, he authored legislation that identifies new revenue streams for farmland conservation that will help farmers hold onto their land. This innovative approach will be ready for adoption by the Legislature in 2012.

"Farmland is under tremendous pressure in New York, where a farm is lost to development every three and a half days," said NYLCV **President Marcia Bystryn**. "Farms play a vital role in New York's economy by supplying fresh food, preserving our environment and celebrating our agricultural heritage. We applaud Senator O'Mara for standing up for New York farms and open space, and look forward to working with him to getting this legislation passed next year."

In response to his Eco-Star recognition, **Sen. O'Mara** said: "I'm grateful for the opportunity to work with the New York League of Conservation Voters and other advocates dedicated to the quality of New York State's future. It's vital that we recognize the environmental and economic importance of agriculture and stay focused on initiatives to preserve farmland for future generations, protect these important livelihoods, and help sustain such a meaningful and valuable way of life."

A complete list of NYLCV's 2011 Eco-Stars can be found [here](#). The NYLCV Education Fund recently awarded the New York State Legislature an [overall grade of "B"](#) for progress on environmental and energy issues in the 2011 legislative session.

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*The New York League of Conservation Voters (NYLCV) engages and educates New Yorkers on environmental issues and the environmental decision-making processes at the local, regional, state and federal government levels. NYLCV fosters open, nonpartisan discussion on environmental policy and empowers New Yorkers to be effective advocates on behalf of the environment.*