



THE ASSEMBLY  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY

**STEVE HAWLEY**  
Deputy Minority Leader  
139<sup>th</sup> District

COMMITTEES  
Ways and Means  
Rules  
Agriculture  
Insurance  
Veterans' Affairs

January 31, 2022

Commissioner Roberta Reardon  
New York State Department of Labor  
12 W.A. Harriman Campus  
Albany, NY 12240

Dear Commissioner Reardon:

I am writing urging you to not destroy New York States largest industry, agriculture and all the ancillary businesses and the employees who work for them.

Agriculture is expressing grave concern following the Farm Laborers Wage Board decision to implement a 40-hour overtime threshold for farm laborers in New York state. I, along with many farmers and advocates from across the state have spoken out against this proposal, arguing since farms operate on schedules that are at the mercy of the weather and other unpredictable factors, that lowering the threshold would prove fatal for farms who barely turn a profit when paying their laborers under the existing 60-hour threshold.

Farm operators and farm laborers alike have been more united than ever in opposing this mandate and I now fear this decision will come at the cost of countless multi-generational family businesses who will now have no choice but to cease operations. I sincerely hope that you will stop this policy's implementation for the sake of our farmers, families, and economies throughout the state. For the millions of people who love everything about agriculture as we know it here in upstate New York, it would be truly tragic if our local farms became nothing more than memories of a better time.

I truly believe this decision, if implemented, will destroy many farms in New York State and our constituents will pay the price for it. Family farms as we see today, will no longer exist. Please do what is best for New York States largest industry. Remember: No Farms, No Food!

Sincerely,

**STEVE HAWLEY**  
Deputy Minority Leader  
Member of Assembly  
139<sup>th</sup> AD

SMH-esb

CC: David Fisher, NYS Farm Bureau President  
Farm Bureau Presidents Monroe, Genesee and Orleans County

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