

1 **2020 NYSAC Legislative Conference**
2 **Standing Committee on Agriculture & Rural Affairs**
3 **Resolution #1**

4 **Resolution to Support Funding for Farmland Preservation and Agriculture**
5 **Local Assistance Programs**

6 **WHEREAS**, the agriculture industry remains a top contributor to the New York State
7 economy, providing critical jobs, revenues and food for our residents in state and
8 beyond; and

9 **WHEREAS**, the enacted 2019/20 budget allocated \$20 million to farmland protection
10 and \$33,243,000 to agriculture local assistance programs; and

11 **WHEREAS**, the Governor's 2020/21 proposed budget, released on January 21,
12 allocated \$20 million to farmland preservation and \$27,408,000 to agriculture local
13 assistance programs; and

14 **WHEREAS**, New York's farmland protection and agriculture assistance programs help
15 sustain this vital industry; and

16 **WHEREAS**, while funding for farmland protection and agriculture assistance has
17 grown, there is no guarantee that this level of funding will be continued in future years;
18 and

19 **WHEREAS**, more than 30 percent of the farmers in New York State, who cultivate two
20 million acres of land, are 65 years of age or older; and

21 **WHEREAS**, research shows that over 90 percent of these senior farmers do not have a
22 young farmer working alongside them to help manage their business; and

23 **WHEREAS**, farmland in transition is most vulnerable to being sold out of farming; and

24 **WHEREAS**, access to affordable land suitable to starting a new farm operation is the
25 number one barrier new and beginning farmers face when trying to get started; and

26 **WHEREAS**, there were 30 percent fewer young farmers in New York in 2012 than in
27 2002; and

28 **WHEREAS**, farmland protection is an important contributor to successful farmland
29 transition and affordable farmland access.

30 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the New York State Association of
31 Counties (NYSAC) calls upon Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and New York State
32 Legislature to continue New York's commitment to local farms and the agricultural

1 sector by maintaining funding for farmland protection from the State Environmental
2 Protection Fund at \$20 million and agriculture local assistance programs at
3 \$33,243,000 in the FY 2020/21 budget; and

4 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that copies of this resolution be sent to the counties
5 of New York State encouraging member counties to enact similar resolutions; and

6 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NYSAC shall forward copies of this resolution to
7 Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, the New York State Legislature, the Commissioner of
8 Agriculture and Markets, and all others deemed necessary and proper.