



Lawsuit Reform Alliance of New York

Justice. Fairness. Common Sense.

July 10, 2017

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

I write to you to respectfully request that you sign S.1152A/A.559A into law. This bill will create liability relief for agricultural tourism, an industry vital to the New York economy.

Agricultural tourism represents an important revenue opportunity for entrepreneurial farmers—especially in struggling Upstate economies—but many have had to give up these opportunities due to the prohibitive cost of insurance. In fact, as a result of New York's current liability climate, many insurance carriers are no longer willing to cover agricultural tourism activities. Equine activities are especially susceptible to litigation which has caused youth organizations such as 4H to minimize their presence in this state. Additionally, many farms offer educational programs for children that promote respect for the environment and healthy eating habits. New York's farmers should not forego the economic benefits of agricultural tourism and education for our children due to fear of being sued.

The bill does not offer farmers immunity from liability; rather, it provides clarity for farm owners as well as the public concerning responsible engagement in agricultural activities. By addressing the inherent risks of agricultural tourism, the bill aims to bring New York in line with most other states in the nation by reducing the liability burden on farms, equestrian centers and you-pick operations.

For the above reasons, the Lawsuit Reform Alliance of New York strongly supports the aforementioned legislation and hopes to see it signed into law.

Very truly yours,

Thomas B. Stebbins
Executive Director
Lawsuit Reform Alliance of New York

cc: Alphonso B. David, Counsel to the Governor
Richard A. Ball, Commissioner, New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets