

Introduced by Presiding Officer, on request of the County Executive and Legislators Krupski, Fleming, Browning

HOME RULE MESSAGE REQUESTING THE STATE OF NEW YORK TO ENACT LEGISLATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF AGRICULTURE IN SUFFOLK COUNTY (SENATE BILL S.6039 ASSEMBLY BILL A.7703)

WHEREAS, Suffolk County has worked assiduously since the early 1970's to preserve and protect the County's farmland resource, agriculture industry and heritage; and

WHEREAS, the most important tool in the County's agricultural preservation effort has been its pioneering Purchase of Development Rights Program ("PDR program"). Under this program, farmland stays in private ownership and remains in agricultural production while the County acquires the property's non-agricultural development rights; and

WHEREAS, the success of the County's PDR program is universally recognized. Despite enormous development pressure, the County of Suffolk has permanently preserved 10,500 acres of farmland and helped ensure that agriculture remains a viable industry in the County. In fact, Suffolk County is one of the most productive agricultural counties in the State, generating hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue, creating thousands of jobs and bolstering the County's increasingly important tourism industry; and

WHEREAS, the PDR program is a working lands program designed to ensure that land is available to support a productive agriculture industry for this, and future generations in Suffolk County; and

WHEREAS, Suffolk County needs enabling State legislation to clarify that participants in the PDR program have a right to use standard agricultural and best management practices to sustain agricultural production on their farms; and

WHEREAS, legislation has been introduced in the New York State Legislature to accomplish these purposes; and

WHEREAS, this proposed legislation is consistent with the policy of the State of New York to conserve and protect farmland for the production of food and other agricultural products for this, and future generations; now, therefore be it

1st RESOLVED, that this Legislature, in accordance with the provisions of Section 40 of the New York Municipal Home Rule Law, and joining with the County Executive, hereby finds and declares that the facts recited in the above WHEREAS clauses establish the necessity for the enactment of Senate Bill S.6039 and Assembly Bill A.7703, for the preservation of agriculture on PDR lands in Suffolk County; and be it further

2nd RESOLVED, that the Clerk of this Legislature is hereby directed to forward copies of this Resolution to Governor Andrew M. Cuomo; to the Majority Leader of the New York State Senate, John J. Flanagan; to the Speaker of the New York State Assembly, Carl E. Heastie; to the Minority Leaders of the New York State Senate and the New York State Assembly; and to each member of the Long Island delegation to the New York State Legislature.

DATED: June 6, 2017