

## AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT

### **New York State Grange....**

- urges defeat of the re-introduced Clean Water Restoration Act which would expand federal jurisdiction to every wet area in the nation, including ditches, rain collected low spots in farmers' fields, even ground water run-off.
- opposes all regulations that would allow the Environmental Protection Agency to impose any cow flatulence emission tax on dairy and beef farmers, both presently and in the future, within the U.S.
- reaffirms 2008 policy that opposes further restrictions on the burning of agricultural trash.
- joins with New York State Association of Agricultural Fairs (NYSAAF) and the New York Farm Bureau (NYFB) requesting that premium reimbursement at current levels to county fairs remain intact, thus sustaining an important aspect of rural living and long-standing American traditions provided by our county fairs.
- strongly supports that NY State funds shall be made available for the dairy assistance program to support funds made through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009; that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) farm service agency increase loan guarantees to dairy farm operators; that milk income be paid on the Class 1 base floor price of \$18 (eighteen) dollars per hundredweight (cwt); supports modifications to the federal milk marketing order program that accurately prices milk to reflect a pricing system that addresses the domestic and international milk markets, including a supply management program that minimizes price volatility; and would support a milk supply management program endorsed by dairy producer groups.
- supports funding be secured for the Recycling Agricultural Plastics Project (RAPP) through the Department of Agriculture and Markets Fund.
- requests that the NYS Grange Standing Committee on Agriculture and Environment review the Council of Agriculture Organization legislative recommendations and policy statement with taking a priority interest on the Agriculture and Environment Subsection of the CAO policy.
- favors returning farm market food stamp coupons to \$2.00 increments.

### **Reaffirmed policy....**

- supports legislation that will enhance rural revitalization, agribusiness development, and micro-enterprise funding; further that we support the creation of a rural revitalization program; creation of an agribusiness development micro-enterprise revolving fund; and the economic development of farm related businesses.
- supports a loan assistance grant program to help develop Agribusiness and set up basic business management training and technical assistance.
- supports the increase of penalties for criminal acts of destruction of agricultural crops, products and property.
- supports the establishment of an "Agriculture Disaster Area Revolving Fund" in New York State to provide farmers with low interest loans in time of major disaster.
- supports "lemon laws" for farm machinery, similar to current laws for motor vehicles.
- strongly urges the U.S. to charge a tariff on imported apple concentrate, further that the apple concentrate meet the same standards as apple concentrate from U.S. apple farmers.
- supports legislation that would amend the General Obligations Law concerning limiting the liability of landowners and allowing the use of their land for recreational activities.
- supports legislation that would require private timber companies wishing to purchase trees in our national forest be made to assume the total bill of the harvesting plus a reasonable return to the treasury for the trees cut to cover the cost of maintaining these forests to marketability.
- urges the International Joint Commission to recognize the effect of low water levels in the St. Lawrence River on the economic condition of upstate New York and to do all within their power to alleviate the situation.
- opposes the removal or sale of water from the Great Lakes watershed.

## EDUCATION

### **New York State Grange....**

- opposes legislation that would allow school districts to operate with a shorter school year achieved by longer school days.

### **Reaffirmed policy...**

- reaffirms current Grange policy on the Regents Action Plan, further that the development of the early identification and intervention programs for all students be continued.
- recommends that the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and Expected Family Contribution (EFC) regulations be adjusted to reflect family expenses, such as real estate taxes, medical expenses and other financial obligations in the determination of financial aid.
- supports funding for the school food service program to ensure that children have a better foundation for learning.

## FEDERAL ISSUES

### **New York State Grange...**

- supports legislation that would require the immediate removal of any elected or appointed officials who have been convicted of a felony during their term of office.
- supports legislation that requires the Veterans Administration to pay benefits to in-country Vietnam veterans effective the first day of the month that the veteran was diagnosed with the service connected presumptive condition.
- supports legislation that would allow children's Social Security numbers and other private information to be frozen by the child's legal custodian in the same manner as adults in order to protect them from identity theft.
- supports legislation that would require the Veterans Administration to pay Title 38 VA Compensation Benefits to veterans having prostate cancer surgery, effective the date of said surgery rather than the date the veteran files a claim.
- supports rescinding the exemption from third-party testing given to Mattel by the Consumer Products Safety Commission and supports requiring all companies comply to the full extent of the law, setting strict limits for lead, lead paint and chemicals known as phthalates, and the mandatory third party testing of products geared for children 12 and under.
- opposes ratification of the Law of the Sea Treaty which would give the United Nations control and jurisdiction over the world's bodies of water.
- supports passage of HR 1046 or similar legislation that will exempt U.S. Artisan-made toys and homemade articles from third party testing as required by the Consumer Products Safety Improvement Act of 2008.

### **Reaffirmed policy....**

- supports the solution for alternate provisions in the event of mass casualties in the House of Representatives.
- opposes anyone bringing a lawsuit against the fast food industry claiming the fast food industry is responsible for the claimant's obesity.
- strongly opposes the United States government getting involved with agreements or treaties with the United Nations or any other international body that takes away individual rights guaranteed under the Constitution or Bill of Rights or that imposes taxation on the citizens of the United States.
- supports review of Congress on all trade and tariff policies with a view of protection for American agriculture, industry and jobs.
- calls on our elected officials to more closely monitor how the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other U.S. loans and grants to foreign countries are disbursed.

- opposes the creation of Biosphere Reserves and any other action, which allows the control over the use of land in our country to the United Nations, or any international body.
- supports the New York State Legislature and the U.S. Congress looking into the possibility of either outlawing bounty hunters or requiring them to meet all the standards that are required of police officers, correcting any deficiencies in the laws that could affect anyone's fundamental civil liberties.
- recommends the Federal Government ratify any and all treaties relating to Indian lands, and failing in their duty to do so, assume full responsibility for any monetary settlement through the courts to the Indian Nation with no inclusion of land. Any land to be purchased should be only from willing sellers with the same taxes and benefits accorded all residential or business owners.
- requests that the appointed directors of the U.S. Postal Service be responsible in the management of these funds to keep the cost of postage within the means of those at the lowest level of incomes.
- objects to the removal of "One Nation under God" from the pledge of allegiance and "In God We Trust" from our United States currency.
- believes that the members of the U.S. Senate should recite the pledge of allegiance out of respect for those who have fought for and, in many cases, died for the benefits that the Constitution of the United States has guaranteed for all the citizens of the United States.
- supports that top priority be given to ensure continued funding of Social Security, sufficient for future generations, and without drastically increasing the eligibility age.
- supports substantial increases in penalties for Federal Communication Commission violations in the transmission of obscene, indecent and profane language and images by television and radio broadcasters.
- opposes the placement of any visual entertainment device in a vehicle within the driver's area of vision.
- supports retention of the Selective Service System.

## **GRANGE ISSUES**

### **New York State Grange...**

- encourages that each Pomona Grange plant sugar maple and/or other trees in their county.
- requests the Ox Roast Manager to submit a prioritized list of estimated costs for necessary repairs to the Ox Roast building at the State Fairgrounds, to be approved by the NYSG Executive Committee.
- changes the name of the Family Advocacy Committee to Family Activities Committee.

## **HEALTH**

### **New York State Grange....**

- urges that any health care reform legislation includes measures that will address the special needs of rural areas, such as the shortage of doctors, adequate health care facilities and meaningful changes to make prescription drugs affordable for those who need the medications.
- supports legislation that would allow testing of students for performance enhancing drugs who are participating in school activities to detect illegal use, if there is a reasonable suspicion.
- urges legislators to override the 1950 Supreme court ruling that prevents medical malpractice suits against military doctors with the exception of combat situations.
- supports legislation that would change the laws for health coverage for veterans with service- connected disabilities and their families, to include their spouse and children.
- supports legislation that would develop a Silver Alert System for people dealing with any form of dementia.
- supports legislation that would put e-cigarettes into the same category as regular tobacco products.

### **Reaffirmed policy....**

- supports legislation that would encourage the testing for hearing impairments in children from birth up to and including age three.

- supports change in Medicaid regulations that would charge the home state of the legal residence of a person on Medicaid when he/she needs emergency medical attention in a state he/she is visiting.
- supports legislation that would eliminate the 36-month time limit for Medicare coverage for immunosuppressive medications for transplant recipients.
- supports the State granting financial assistance to aid the county fairs in assuring that water for human consumption meet standards of connections with public water or chlorinating systems if New York State and/or the county health department requires it.

## **STATE ISSUES**

### **New York State Grange....**

- supports a constitutional amendment that would allow the Governor to nominate a person to fill the position of Lieutenant Governor, to be confirmed by the Senate should the position become vacant for any reason.
- supports legislation that would have meaningful reform for our state government addressing the following:
  1. If the legislative body is not meeting as prescribed by our constitution, that the Governor and Comptroller have the authority to withhold all salaries from that body until such time that they resume their deliberations.
  2. All legislative sessions to be open to the public.
  3. The budget process be open and not finalized behind closed doors by those in power.
- supports legislation that would require police agencies to obtain a justified warrant before being allowed to attach GPS tracking devices to vehicles, thus preventing police from arbitrarily using them without cause.
- supports legislation that would permit youth over the age of 12 to petition for Orders of Protection on their own behalf, even if their abuser is a minor as well.
- opposes any changes to New York State Environmental Conservation Laws raising the current minimum ages for obtaining NYS hunting licenses.
- supports the passage of Proposal #1 on Election Day, November 3, 2009, which would authorize New York State to convey up to six acres of forestry preserve to National Grid in return for at least 10 acres of forested land to be incorporated into the forest preserve for the purpose of ensuring a more dependable electric power supply to the North Country while preserving lands with unique resources, and that we also support increased public announcements to inform the voters of the importance of their support in passage of Proposal #1 on Election Day, November 3, 2009.
- recommends that the State Fair provide lights at the exits so the State Police can be seen more easily from a distance away and that these lights be used on any occasion the State Fairgrounds are used when people have to cross State Fair Boulevard to the parking lots.
- requests the NYS Fair Board keep square dancing as an activity of the NYS Fair and further that the NYS Fair Board publicize the date, time, location, etc., that square dance clubs are scheduled to perform so the public can enjoy this activity, and also requests the NYS Fair Board to provide ample floor space so square dance clubs can perform their routines safely.
- seeks legislation to support all counties in NYS in developing and promoting recycling solutions such as placement of receptacles, recycling pickup, and recycling drop off centers consistent with county and municipal waste management practices; that New York State promote citizen awareness of the wide range of materials that can be recycled, and that such legislation should provide for collaboration between local governments, recycling partners, and consumers to develop and promote flexible local solutions to make recycling successful.

### **Reaffirmed policy....**

- supports legislation for alcoholic beverage advertising to be curtailed with special sensitivity given to its effect on our youth.

- opposes the placement of signs at the location of alcohol-related accidents causing fatalities and to use these state funds to educate the public of the dangers of alcohol and other drugs.
- supports legislation that could help small businesses remain in New York State.
- opposes any practices by any company that requires exclusivity to carry their product except in the case of a legal franchise agreement.
- supports privacy legislation and do-not-call list laws.
- supports a requirement of residency of five (5) years in New York State preceding election of candidates for U.S. House of Representatives or U.S. Senate.
- opposes the requirement of mandatory liability insurance for all dog owners in New York State.
- supports legislation that would prevent a criminal from bringing a civil lawsuit against a victim or a concerned citizen who might injure that criminal while defending themselves or trying to prevent a criminal act.
- endorses the protection of victims from the undue publicity regarding the nature of the crime committed against them, including the publishing of their name.
- supports stricter enforcement of rules in licensing operators and caregivers of child day care centers.
- opposes the closing of snowmobile trails in the Adirondack State Park.
- supports changes in the laws governing bicycling to require all cyclists to wear a safety helmet while riding a bicycle.
- opposes the requirement of the installation of driver monitoring devices on school buses, but instead support the U.S. Department of Transportation requirement for random drug and alcohol testing to be conducted from time to time.
- opposes the installation of shoulder harnesses in full-size school buses in New York State.
- supports allowing school buses to travel up to the posted speed limit on all highways in New York State as opposed to the Department of Education regulation which limits school buses to a maximum of 55 mph, an unsafe speed on major expressways.
- favors a requirement that all highway departments of the State of New York keep brush obstructions trimmed to give a clear view of the crossroads.
- requests our State Government to return all road use funds to a dedicated highway fund for the repair of roads and bridges only, to eliminate the need of property or other taxes to replace these CHIP funds.

## **TAXATION AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY**

### **New York State Grange....**

- supports legislative action to make sure that the unclaimed bottle deposit money (when available) is dedicated only to help fund environmental programs (cleanup, educational outreach programs and needed coordinators) all necessary to keep us in compliance with state mandates that each community must have an active solid waste and recycling program with a high percentage of resident participation.
- supports legislation that would amend the Credit Accountability Responsibility and Disclosure Act of 2009 by setting a maximum interest rate for all credit cards and by fining those who issue credit cards and attempt to make up possible losses by imposing fees, higher interest rates or other charges on responsible card holders who pay their entire balance in full each month.
- supports efforts to stop or delay the implementation of mandatory new license plate purchases.
- supports inclusion of the STAR Rebate Program in future budgets.
- supports leaving the retirement age at 55 for employees covered under the New York State Retirement System, having 10 years of service.
- urges the New York State Legislature to repeal the Metropolitan Commuter Transportation Mobility Tax (MCTMT) for the counties of Rockland, Orange, Putnam and Dutchess.

### **Reaffirmed policy...**

- supports tax break incentives for only those companies who keep all jobs in the United States by keeping all of their production business physically in the United States, further that a symmetrical tariff

of 27.5% be imposed on all Chinese products and remove sanctions once China has moved to a market-based currency.

- opposes any new taxes on hospitals and nursing homes.

- opposes the imposition of tolls on interstate highways.

- supports the increase of money sent to schools above budgeted state funding and further that more assistance be given to New York students attending colleges in New York State and that the amount spent for lottery advertising be cut to help meet the above goals.