

Gillibrand Announces New Upstate Jobs Bill to Put New Yorkers Back to Work, Rebuild Economy for Long Term Strength and Stability

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From the Office of Kirsten Gillibrand:

With more than 325,000 Upstate New Yorkers out of work, U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand today announced the Upstate Works Act, legislation she wrote to provide targeted support for multiple sectors of Upstate New York's economy, put New Yorkers back to work, and ensure long term economic strength and stability.

The Upstate Works Act provides new access to capital for small businesses to grow and create jobs, retools New York's manufacturers to produce clean domestic energy, provides tax credits for family farms to diversify and expand their production, provides resources to help students and working adults get the new training they need for the jobs of the future, and helps connect Upstate businesses with new markets by expanding broadband to every corner of New York.

"As I spend time in every corner of Upstate New York, there is no question that communities are facing unique economic challenges that require targeted solutions," Senator Gillibrand said. "Upstate New York is home to world class businesses and some of the hardest working people in the world, but too many workers are struggling to find a job and too many of our small businesses are struggling to survive. My Upstate Works Act gives small businesses the capital they need to grow and create jobs, rejuvenates our manufactures to make New York the clean energy capital of the world, gives working adults access to new training to prepare them for the jobs of the future, and helps our family farms get ahead. No other state can lead the way to the new economy like New York, and my Upstate Jobs bill taps into New York's potential."

July unemployment data from the New York State Department of Labor show that more than 325,000 Upstate New Yorkers are out of work, giving the region an unemployment rate of approximately 7.7 percent. See below for detailed regional breakdown, along with statements of support from local leaders across Upstate.

SENATOR GILLIBRAND'S UPSTATE WORKS ACT

Expands Access to Capital

Once thriving economic engines, Upstate New York's urban centers have been among those hardest hit by the economic downturn. Last year, Senator Gillibrand helped extend the Empowerment Zone and Renewable Communities program that helps small and medium cities secure capital to help businesses in their communities grow through tax credits, tax-free bonds and other federal benefits. From 2004 to 2006, Empowerment Zone benefits helped create nearly 200,000 American jobs.

Now, Senator Gillibrand is working to expand eligibility so more New York businesses can take

advantage of the Empowerment Zone benefits to grow and create new private sector jobs. Specifically, the Upstate Works Act would authorize the U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary to expand zone boundaries to help secure additional capital investments for businesses that create jobs within Empowerment Zones, and work to make zone bonds more marketable and effective.

Additionally, the legislation would create grants for states, local governments and non-profit organizations to pro-actively inform businesses of the benefits available to them so they can put them to use in their communities.

Retool NY Manufacturers for Clean Energy Production

Once a manufacturing powerhouse, Upstate New York has lost nearly 90,000 manufacturing jobs since 2001. Senator Gillibrand knows New York's manufacturers stand ready to work and power our economy again, and the Upstate Works Act would help retool and rejuvenate our manufacturers for clean energy production, create new jobs, and help make New York the clean energy capital of the world.

The legislation would invest \$30 billion to establish a Manufacturing Revolving Loan Fund – helping small and medium-sized manufacturing businesses expand or establish a clean energy manufacturing operation. It would also invest \$1.5 billion over five years for the Manufacturing Extension Partnership that helps manufacturers access clean energy markets and transition to new, innovative, clean energy manufacturing technologies.

The Alliance for Clean Energy New York estimates this investment could create approximately 50,000 new jobs, while making America more secure by breaking our addiction to foreign oil, and protecting our environment.

Tax Credits for Agricultural Value-Added Investments

The Upstate Works Act includes a provision to encourage New York farmers to develop value-added products that can help farmers increase their income, expand their operations, and create more agriculture jobs for New York.

Specifically, the legislation would offer farms a tax credit worth up to \$30,000 for producing value-added products to spur investments in packaging, chopping and cooking equipment, waste-to-energy generators, and other local processing tools to grow New York's farming communities.

Retrain NY Workers for Jobs of the Future

To make sure New York's workforce is prepared for the jobs of the future, the Upstate Works Act would create partnerships among businesses, colleges and universities to provide worker training opportunities for New York's students and working adults. The legislation would require the U.S. Labor Secretary to award federal grants to:

- Regional skill alliances that help communities offer worker training opportunities for specific industries; and
- States to help provide the resources that businesses and industry organizations need to support worker skill alliances in every corner of New York.

Expand Broadband Access Across New York

Nearly 10 million New Yorkers lack access to high-speed Internet, with rural communities disproportionately affected. The lack of broadband access cuts families off from services, cuts Upstate businesses off from markets, and holds our entire economy back from growing.

Senator Gillibrand's Upstate Works Act would provide a 50 percent tax credit help cover the costs for businesses to install broadband services in underserved rural areas, and an extra 10 percent for installing high-speed broadband service, helping to connect more New York businesses with new markets for their products, help attract new businesses to New York, and create new jobs for New York.

Detailed Regional Breakdown, Statements Of Support From Local Leaders Across Upstate:

- In Western New York, approximately 60,000 Western New York residents are out of work, giving the region an 8.3 percent unemployment rate.

Buffalo Mayor Byron W. Brown said, "I thank Senator Gillibrand for her leadership with this forward-thinking legislation that will add strength and vitality to businesses across put Upstate New York. The Upstate Works Act will be pivotal in our ability to revitalize our economy and stimulate new investment and job creation. The incentives of grants and tax-breaks will stimulate investment, improvement of sustainable practices, development of green technologies and the creation of much needed jobs. This legislation will help our state's businesses, particularly small- and medium-sized businesses, with new opportunities for growth and greater viability."

Niagara Falls Mayor Paul Dyster said, "Senator Gillibrand's Five Point Proposal to spur economic development in New York State seeks to expand those programs that have worked in the past while creating new initiatives to take us into the future. Section's 1 and 2 of the Senator's plan are especially appropriate for developing jobs and strengthening the economy of Niagara Falls. We want to work closely with Senator Gillibrand to make her proposal a reality."

Cheektowaga Supervisor Mary F. Holtz stated, "Senator Gillibrand's 5-point proposal aimed at increasing job opportunities in Upstate New York is impressive and I am especially in favor of her bid to transition NY manufacturers to clean energy production. There are many small and mid-sized companies in Cheektowaga who might greatly benefit from the proposed Manufacturing Revolving Loan Fund to retool and establish a clean energy manufacturing operation. Our location and the transportation opportunities here lend to the potential for growth of our existing manufacturing base."

Tonawanda Supervisor Anthony F. Caruana said, "The Upstate Works Act would provide an important set of tools for communities like the Town of Tonawanda. We need to increase access to capital investment in our small and medium size employers, and Upstate Works will help us address that need. Our community is also positioned well to leverage investments in clean energy. We have companies in related fields and we have 'shovel ready' land in the Riverview Solar Technology Park. Upstate Works will provide key resources to turn our assets into new opportunities."

- In the Rochester/Finger Lakes Region, approximately 49,000 Rochester/Finger Lake residents are out of work, giving the region a 7.4 percent unemployment rate.

Rochester Mayor Robert J. Duffy said, "On behalf of the Rochester community, I wish to extend our sincere appreciation for Senator Gillibrand's dedication to increasing job opportunities in Upstate New York through the GROW Act. Renewal Community incentives have been responsible for the creation of more than a thousand area jobs and for saving area businesses millions of dollars. Clearly, Senator Gillibrand's legislation reauthorizing and expanding these programs is a logical and much-needed economic development resource. The Senator's well-thought out proposal will benefit urban and rural areas throughout all of Upstate."

Rochester City Council President Lovely Warren said, "Senator Gillibrand's five-point plan, if adopted, has the capacity to boost New York State's economy through job creation, tax credits and incentives, and training opportunities. I am certainly in favor of the Senator's proposed bill. Any effort to bring new jobs to the Rochester community, and provide assistance for some of our struggling small businesses, definitely has my support. I applaud Senator Gillibrand's commitment to strengthening and stabilizing economic development throughout New York State."

Rochester Business Alliance President and CEO Sandra Parker said, "Senator Gillibrand's Upstate Works proposal rewards business investment, which will help create jobs. In particular, expanding Empowerment Zone tax incentive eligibility will encourage employers to maintain and expand operations in cities like Rochester."

Geneva Mayor Stuart Einstein said, "Geneva is one of many Upstate New York communities that has suffered from the loss of manufacturing jobs, combined with the closure of nearby military facilities that supported our economy. This proposed legislation ties in beautifully with a number of our City's identified economic development priorities. Opportunities to partner with our federal government in such areas as clean energy and niche agricultural production would greatly enhance our chances for success. Senator Gillibrand "gets it", and I applaud her efforts on behalf of the people of Upstate."

Canandaigua Mayor Ellen Polimeni said, "Senator Gillibrand has hit on several areas in need of attention in upstate New York. Agriculture and small business will benefit from her proposal and the broadband incentives will compliment what we are already establishing with our broadband ring. I'm delighted to see a focus on upstate."

- In the Southern Tier, approximately 22,000 Southern Tier residents are out of work, giving the region an 8 percent unemployment rate.

Binghamton Mayor Matt Ryan said, "The Upstate Works Act is just what our region needs to create clean, green jobs for years to come. I share Senator Gillibrand's vision for the Upstate economy, and I applaud her for advancing this legislation."

Broome County Executive Barbara J. Fiala said, "In these difficult economic times, any additional support for programs that can promote job creation and provide for job training is extremely important for Upstate New York. I want to thank the Senator for understanding the economic challenges we face and working to provide us with additional funds and tools to jump start our local economies both rural and urban in Upstate."

Elmira Mayor John Tonello said, "Senator Gillibrand's five-point proposal gets at the heart of what ails upstate New York by providing real and immediate grants, tax-breaks and other incentives that will spur job growth. Clean-energy research happening at places like Cornell

University can become reality through incentives to encourage the manufacture and use of the latest technologies. Access to training, affordable broadband, and other resources will help job-seekers and employers alike. The senator's plan is certainly good news for New York.”

Hornell Mayor Shawn D. Hogan said, “As Mayor of a small Upstate City, Senator Gillibrand’s 5 point proposal would provide tremendous tools to help revitalize our struggling economy, we have faced jobs and population loss for years, with these practical tools we can work in partnership to turn the tide to prosperity rather than despair. I enthusiastically endorse and support Senator Gillibrand’s efforts.”

Norwich Mayor Joseph P. Maiurano said, “These are the kinds of initiatives we need to jumpstart job creation and protect traditional trades in Upstate New York. As Mayor of the City of Norwich, I completely support the Upstate Works act Bill. I thank Senator Gillibrand for spearheading this effort.”

- In Central New York, approximately 45,000 Central New York residents are out of work, giving the region a 7.7 percent unemployment rate.

Syracuse Mayor Stephanie Miner said, “The Upstate Works Act represents a proactive and strategic approach to economic and workforce development that builds off the already proven Empowerment Zone model. Senator Gillibrand clearly recognizes the need for private investment and job growth in Upstate New York, and with this bill, she is ensuring that urban communities like Syracuse have another tool in place to make it happen.”

Utica Mayor David Roefaro said, “This legislation by Senator Gillibrand will be a shot in the arm for Upstate because it actually creates an incentive for business owners to transition to clean energy production and expand into new markets. Moreover, by investing billions in a Manufacturing Revolving Loan Fund, our rural businesses can retool, expand, and establish homegrown clean energy operations. Right now, the majority of our clean technology manufacturing takes place overseas. With legislation like this, manufactures, farmers, and business owners can focus on ebbing imports and increasing exports. Additionally, cities like Utica and all of Upstate can and should lead the way in showcasing the possibilities and the benefits of green technology. Our cities, like many companies, must retool for the future. This legislation allows us to do that, while providing for practical ways to pay for it.”

Oswego Mayor Randy Bateman said, “I applaud Senator Gillibrand's leadership in addressing the core problems of Upstate New York's economic recovery. The Upstate Works Act will expand small business's access to the benefits of Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities, support the transition to Clean Energy Manufacturing by providing a \$30 billion Manufacturing Revolving Loan Fund, provide training grants for employees in rural areas and tax credits to expand broadband access in underserved and rural areas. This legislation will help to revitalize the economic future of Upstate New York communities.”

Auburn Mayor Michael D. Quill said, “As an urban center in Upstate New York which has struggled to deal with sustained population loss and a diminishing industrial base, the proposed Upstate Works Act including the Manufacturing Revolving Loan Fund would benefit the City of Auburn through infusion of funding directly into local manufacturing operations, and through coordinated workforce development initiatives at the regional level. The success and the growth of our local industry hinges on our ability to remain competitive in a global economy, and is the very foundation for a high quality of life.”

CenterState Corporation for Economic Opportunity President Robert M. Simpson said, "Using a targeted approach, this legislation addresses a several important issues for the upstate economy. With tight focus areas on rural infrastructure and capital investment, business growth in distressed urban areas, and workforce training, Upstate Works provides support for upstate regional economic development efforts."

- In the North Country, approximately 20,000 North Country residents are out of work, giving the region a 7.9 percent unemployment rate.

Plattsburgh-North Country Chamber of Commerce President Garry Douglas said, "There are several components to this legislation which would support economic development in the North Country. We welcome the proposed training resources for business consortia, which will be critically needed over the next few years to effectively rebuild employment along with business competitiveness. And the proposed tax credits for rural broadband development are also crucial in regions like the Adirondacks if we are to get 21st century technology to areas most in need. Recognizing the importance of agriculture is also a welcome component, especially supporting the kind of value-added investments that can help make family operations viable and sustainable into the future. We thank Senator Gillibrand for putting this package forward."

Clarkson University President Tony Collins said, "The Upstate Works Act introduced today by Senator Gillibrand represents a watershed opportunity to rebuild New York's economy for a sustainable future. From tax credits to expand broadband access in our rural communities to recognizing the clean energy expertise in the State, this legislation delivers critical incentives to accompany the economic development efforts of businesses, universities and private citizens already in place."

The Saranac Lake Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Sylvie Nelson said, "Saranac Lake Area Chamber of Commerce and its partners understand the crucial role broadband needs to play in our rural region. Broadband has been identified as a priority economic development tool for the entire Adirondack Park. When our businesses and residents can have access to this technology, we will be able to compete globally as a region. Moreover, this technology is key to attracting telecommuters who can live and play where they work. These green jobs are crucial to the economic well-being of the park while ensuring the region remains forever wild."

Executive Director of the 14 County Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA) Kate Fish said, "When enacted, the legislation proposed today by Senator Gillibrand will be of great help in our collective effort to build further economic vitality in the urban and rural communities in the ANCA region. ANCA recognizes the economic and community benefits that can result from expanded access to broadband, increasing income for farmers, investment in clean energy innovation and manufacturing, and increased support for workforce training and small & medium-sized business development. We are very encouraged by this proposal."

Malone Chamber of Commerce President, Hugh Hill, said, "These proposals are the definition of investment in opportunity. This bill will generate the jobs and technologies that are essential to build a 21st century economy and help this region become a productive partner in the economic future of this country."

St. Lawrence University President William F. Fox said, "Transitioning to clean energy sources is just one goal that St. Lawrence University has in its long-term aspiration for climate

neutrality, and I am pleased that Senator Gillibrand's proposed legislation supports this goal as well. Educational institutions especially need support for the investments necessary to carry out the 21st century's three Rs: Renew, Recycle, Reuse. And the Senator's support for broadband access contributes to sustainability and well as economic development."

Assemblywoman Addie Russell said, "Senator Gillibrand is targeting relief where we need it the most. I've shared with her many of the concerns that are addressed in this legislation, specifically that we must get back to manufacturing goods here in New York, and focusing on clean energy production is a big part of the future of manufacturing. We have the skilled work force in the North Country and we ought to be leading the nation in manufacturing cutting-edge clean energy systems and installing them right here in New York where they are made. Another important aspect of this bill that will be a shot in the arm to our north country farms is a tax credit that provides benefits to our farmers for making investments that will help them increase their farm revenue by expanding their production ability right on their own farm. This bill also recognizes the need to provide educational opportunities for our workforce, that expanding broadband is essential to improving our business climate, and that government programs need to be more responsive to our changing economy and reach out more to distressed business communities. I applaud and thank Senator Gillibrand for her vital piece of legislation that targets rural New York for federal programs that will allow New York businesses to work their way to prosperity. I look forward to working with Senator Gillibrand in advocating for this bill and will introduce any necessary companion legislation at the state level that will help to move this agenda forward in New York."

Cornell Cooperative Extension Lewis County's, Executive Director Michele E. Ledoux said, "With these financial incentives farms that have contemplated making a change can try it now, because this would offer them a safety net which they have not had. The large cost for these investments is usually equipment and/or facility upgrades which are expensive and tie up too much capital in an uncertain economy."

The Adirondack Council's Executive Director, Brian Houseal said, "We commend Senator Gillibrand for this proposed legislation. Her support to transition New York manufacturers to clean energy production will assist the economic recovery while also enhancing the environment by reducing the emissions that cause climate change, acid rain and mercury pollution."

Jefferson County Industrial Development Agency's Deputy CEO, David J. Zembiec said, "These measures certainly play to the what many of us see as opportunities for the North Country to build on its strengths--an abundance of renewable energy resources, a strong tradition in agriculture, and our workforce. If the U.S. is going to be a leader in clean energy technology, then it's going to take this kind of investment in our homegrown manufacturers if we are to compete with China and other countries that are giving this sector such high priority. Our own region's abundance of renewable resources such as wind, hydro, and biomass should position us well for the manufacture of technologies that utilize those resources. Our farmers are quite resourceful (and we can't afford to see anymore declines in that industry). Offering them an incentive for value-added investments will likely lead to some surprising innovations while stimulating more investment, and job creation, in our local economy. The proposed training grants would provide the opportunity to build on the strong work ethic of our labor force by equipping them with the knowledge and skills to productively apply themselves in this new economy, especially if we can tie this to the renewable energy programs recently developed at several of our region's colleges."

Town of Plattsburgh Supervisor, Bernie Bassett said, "I'm pleased to learn that Senator Gillibrand is supporting legislation that will bring job opportunities to upstate New York and the Town of Plattsburgh. For us to compete in the global market we must also compete with clean energy initiatives. A manufacturing Revolving Loan Fund will provide resources to encourage investment and job creation making local companies more competitive while providing incentives to manufactures to locate or expand their operations in the North Country. Training for existing and new businesses is equally important. Providing Training Grants will bring significant opportunity to this community. The State University at Plattsburgh, Clinton Community College, CV Tech and the new Plattsburgh Aeronautical Institute have the resources necessary to implement the training programs and course work. With access to funding local businesses will now be able to take advantage of those resources to expand their operations and create new jobs. I continue to be impressed with the Senator's efforts to support the needs of our local economy. Her support of legislation that helps agriculture, industry and business will provide the incentives and resources that will enable us to expand existing business while continuing to attract new companies to the Champlain Valley. I commend Senator Gillibrand for helping local government by providing resources to promote investment in our communities."

- In the Capital Region, approximately 44,000 Capital Region residents are out of work, giving the region a 7.6 percent unemployment rate.

Albany Mayor Jerry Jennings said, "I commend Senator Gillibrand for fostering the steps which will help move our economy in the right direction. As Mayor of New York's Capital City, I believe it is critical to assist our citizens with the provision of real job opportunities, to provide our businesses with access to creative resources, and, obviously, to strength our infrastructure. These proposed programs will serve to "jump start" our economy in way that will be sustainable and replicable. I am proud of the work we have performed cooperatively, and with the continued assistance of Senator Gillibrand, look forward to even accomplishing more."

Albany County Executive Mike Breslin said, "The Upstate Works Act is critical legislation for Albany County's farmers and small and medium size businesses. The tax credit for farmers would enable them to invest in value added equipment, create new jobs and grow a sustainable farming industry. In addition, the revolving loan fund will give our small and medium sized businesses the opportunity to retool, expand or establish homegrown clean energy manufacturing operations. I am proud to support this legislation and commend Senator Gillibrand in taking such an important step to improving the economy of Upstate New York."

Schenectady Mayor Brian U. Stratton said "Since 2004, the Schenectady Renewal Community has seen over \$82,000,000 in new investment that was facilitated by provisions of this HUD program which expired at the end of 2009. The demise of this program which coincides with the national economic downturn, has had negative impacts on Schenectady's Economic Development. The Gillibrand WORKS ACT not only brings back an important economic development tool, it also improves the law by letting smaller neighborhood businesses access benefits which were previously off limits to them. Additionally, this law's funding will help Schenectady offset recent staff reductions to provide the necessary marketing and technical assistance that these Renewal Community Businesses need."

Glen Falls Mayor John "Jack" Diamond has come out in strong support of Senator Gillibrand's Initiative calling it a "significant step forward for our upstate region. This proposal will provide great opportunities for our city, our surrounding region, educational institutions such as SUNY at Adirondack by offering support for specialized job training of workers in a variety of

industries we are currently at a disadvantage in competing with companies overseas such as information technology and other specific industries here in the greater Glens Falls region. Senator Gillibrand's plan will offer low interest revolving loan fund for small and mid size businesses for retooling, expanding or establishing clean energy manufacturing operations here in the North Country". Additionally Mayor Diamond noted that Senator Gillibrand has targeted one of our major industries in this region - agriculture – by creating tax credits for investments in qualified value added agricultural property within her program.

Saratoga County Supervisor Joanne Yepsen said, "Upstate New York has unlimited potential to become a leader in the green technology industry as well as agribusiness. It is critical that our top-notch colleges and universities in Saratoga and surrounding counties partner with our green technology businesses and with our agricultural community so that these industries thrive. Senator Gillibrand's Upstate Works Act is exactly the type of vision that we need Upstate. These incentives and tax credits will allow our farmers and businesses to thrive once again. I applaud Senator Gillibrand in her efforts to give our businesses the jump start they need to create jobs and grow our local economy."

Center for Economic Growth President and CEO F. Michael Tucker said, "The Center for Economic Growth strongly supports these proposed changes that will directly and favorably impact the municipalities in our 11 county region of upstate New York. One of the major concerns to any business are taxes, our small and mid-size businesses need tax relief to succeed and the Empowerment Zone tax incentives will directly benefit companies by helping to reduce the tax burden and increase access to capital. CEG's ongoing Workforce Development Initiative continues to advance training opportunities to meet the employment needs of the 21st century global business environment and to provide access to underserved populations for educational and training programs. Working with regional educational institutions, we have created a working partnership. This initiative needs an influx of funding, with adequate resources, such as those suggested here, we will be able to provide qualified employee training for area businesses and much needed jobs for upstate New York."

Schenectady County Legislature Chairwoman Susan Savage said, "In these tough economic times, investing in workforce training and job creation is the key to turning the upstate economy around. Senator Gillibrand's proposal to expand "Renewal Community" zones, and invest in clean energy manufacturing, as well as the other components of this proposal, will help build upon the success we have had attracting jobs and investment in Schenectady County. I want to thank Senator Gillibrand for putting this proposal forward."

- In the Hudson Valley, approximately 86,000 Hudson Valley residents are out of work, giving the region a 7.5 percent unemployment rate.

Hudson Mayor Rick Scalera said, "Senator Gillibrand's Upstate Works act is filled with long awaited initiatives that both small and large communities throughout New York desperately need for job creation and job retention."

Newburgh Mayor Nick Valentine said, "Senator Gillibrand's Upstate Works Act legislation would be a great benefit to the people of Newburgh by providing technical training and job skill education programs to an area where it is sorely lacking. Expanded partnerships with the City's two colleges; Mount Saint Mary and SUNY Orange along with perhaps welcoming a trade school such as the DeVry Institute or the Technical Careers Institute would have a tremendous positive effect on our residents and neighboring communities by providing valuable skills enabling workers to compete for jobs in the modern workplace. A vibrant

community consists of skilled workers and thriving businesses, this legislation would be a great step towards that goal.”

Orange County Chamber of Commerce President Dr. John A. D’Ambrosio said, “The Orange County Chamber of Commerce supports any legislation that focuses on creating opportunities for businesses and new jobs for New York State residents. The Upstate Works Act appears to be an ambitious undertaking. But the bottom line is that action must be taken to make New York State a more attractive, profitable place to do business. The Upstate Works Act appears to be a good step in that direction.”

Hudson Valley Economic Development Corporation President & CEO Mike Oates said, “We need help! Our business community is crying out for innovative solutions to the challenges that they are facing on a daily basis. The Upstate Works Act is an important step in addressing many of our pressing needs. In less than 10 years, Upstate New York has lost more than 88,000 manufacturing jobs alone. We need to change that trend immediately. Senator Gillibrand’s efforts to transition our manufacturers to clean energy production will help create jobs and investment in New York. Farmers are a key part of our past and our future. Tax credits for agricultural value-added investments will provide our farmers with the tools needed to create jobs and help increase investment to modernize their operations which will in turn allow them to be more competitive. A skilled workforce is the number one item that company look for when deciding on where to site their business. It is critical that we continue to train our workforce to meet the required skills in a competitive business world. Senator Gillibrand understands that we need to have the resources in place to capitalize on the strengths of our 4-year colleges, universities and community colleges. In order for our businesses to be competitive on a national and global stage, we need to expand broadband access to rural areas. Without it, we simply are not in the game. Senator Gillibrand has been a leading voice in providing a roadmap for success to our rural communities. Access to capital remain one of the most pressing issues facing businesses. By expanding the types of businesses eligible for empowerment zone tax incentives, Senator Gillibrand is providing solutions to some our most challenged cities and communities in New York.”