



March 17th, 2026

Mailed to each of our 26 representatives

Dear Representative \_\_\_\_\_,

The New York Forest Owners Association (NYFOA) is supportive of the 2026 Farm Bill that the House committee on Agriculture has passed and will come before the entire House (House bill, HR7567). Title VIII of the bill continues many Forestry programs that will directly improve the sustainability and productivity of New York's forests. We urge your support for this important action.

New York has 19 million acres of forest and woodlands (64% of all land in New York), 75% of which are privately owned by more than 700 thousand individuals or companies located across the State. The forests and woodlands of New York benefit the entire 19 million people who live and work in our Empire State. Over 15 million get their clean drinking water from a forested watershed. People from across the State recreate in the private and public forest lands. Timber harvesting and the wood products industry support employment of over 40,000 New York citizens - especially in our rural areas where job opportunities are scarce. Sustainably managed forests and woodlands sequester greenhouse gases, helping to combat global warming. Our forests are the "lungs of our State."

Some key forest-related components of the House bill are the renewal of the Wood Innovation and Community Wood Grant program. This will help communities move away from steel and other high carbon usage products to more sustainable ones which in turn provides a market for forest owners to economically manage their lands. A second key component is the renewal of the Rural Innovation Stronger Economy (RISE) program. This will help develop a much-needed rural workforce to engage in various forest improvement practices.

There are many difficult issues for our legislators this year and passage of the house Farm Bill is only one step. The Senate must pass its own version and then reconciliation must take place. NYFOA has, for the last 60 years, and will continue to, work closely with other federal and state agencies of New York, and private organizations to promote sustainable forest management through educational seminars and woods walks throughout the State, and our magazine. Our local chapters sponsor events throughout the year, and we welcome attendance and participation by our congressional delegation.

Edward Neuhauser  
President NYFOA

Hugh Canham, Chair  
Legislative Affairs NYFOA