

NEW YORK
STATE
SENATE

ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247



December 19, 2017

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

Dear Governor Cuomo,

In your 2017 State of the State you outlined proposals for New York's forests which included: revisions to the State's forest property tax law including reimbursements to taxing jurisdictions; two new grant programs aimed at private forest stewardship and community forests; and, a State agency procurement preference for the purchase of New York based forest products.

These initiatives aimed largely at private forest lands have the potential to significantly bolster New York's \$20+ billion forest based economy and benefit all New Yorkers in the ecosystem benefits derived from them. The proposals you outlined do, however, have fiscal implications on the State, which were not included in last year's budget and thus not addressed in our SFY 2017-18 budget as enacted.

Over the past several months we have had several stakeholders reach out to us expressing their support for the forest proposals you outlined. We would welcome your inclusion of these initiatives in the SFY 2018-19 Executive Budget and Legislative package so that we can consider them in our negotiations for the coming year.

The 19 million acres of New York's forests support a robust forest economy in upstate New York and provide a wealth of social and environmental benefits to our communities. Over the years we have done tremendous initiatives for the publicly owned forests in New York and the time is ripe for us to address the private forest lands which make up 75 percent of the forest lands in the State.

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We look forward working with you on behalf of New York's forests and forest landowners in the coming year.

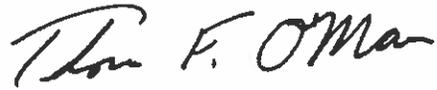
Sincerely,



Elizabeth O'C. Little
Senator



Frederick J. Akshar II
Senator



Thomas F. O'Mara
Senator



Patty Ritchie
Senator



Joseph A. Griffo
Senator