



November 30, 2023

The Honorable Kathy Hochul  
Governor of New York State  
New York State Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224

**Re: Enactment of Agrivoltaics Research Program bill (S.7081/ A.4911)**

Dear Governor Hochul,

The Alliance for Clean Energy New York (ACE NY) is writing to respectfully request that you sign legislation which will amend the Agriculture and Markets Law to establish an agrivoltaics research program to develop innovative science-based solutions to facilitate the co-location of crops and photovoltaics while promoting the biodiversity of endemic flora and fauna, S.7081 (Hinchey) / A.4911 (Kelles).

This legislation will utilize the expertise of the New York State College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell University to develop the research program, and the coordinate technologies and management practices necessary for implementation. With this comprehensive plan supported by the latest science and technology, New York State can improve its agricultural sector and support farmers while taking important steps toward the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act goals of 70% renewable emission electricity generation by 2030 and 100% zero-emission electricity generation by 2040 through increased solar capacity.<sup>1</sup>

This program will allow New York to simultaneously pursue agricultural and renewable energy projects while avoiding excessive land use. Moreover, it will help to bridge the gap between New York's farmers and the renewable energy industry by giving farmers the opportunity to continue their operations while supporting solar energy, and to take advantage of new sources of income from land leases. Moreover, farmers will benefit from the research on soil quality, crop management, and climate resiliency incorporated within the program, and local economies will receive a boost from construction jobs.

This program is thoughtfully designed with transparency and the needs of stakeholders in mind. The research aims to evaluate the most compatible crops and livestock with agrivoltaics and which installation techniques are most suitable, as well as how to promote biodiversity conservation throughout implementation. Moreover, the program will study socio-economic factors and create a pilot program to aid in the recommendation of strategies for agrivoltaics. This extensive research, in combination with annual reports prepared and distributed to the public by the Cornell

Cooperative Extension System, will boost understanding and confidence in the program among New Yorkers, especially farmers.

Thank you for your consideration. This bill will establish New York as a leader in the implementation of innovative solutions to co-locate agriculture and renewable energy projects and will extend participation in the renewable energy transition to the state's farmers. The Alliance for Clean Energy New York urges you to sign this bill. It will be an important step forward in New York's ongoing efforts to ensure a just and economically viable transition to renewable energy.

Sincerely,

/s/

Deb Peck Kelleher  
Deputy Director  
Alliance for Clean Energy New York