



Hinchey to chair Senate Agriculture Committee

By *Andrea Macko*
Porcupine Soup

ALBANY—Freshman Senator Michelle Hinchey recently announced her Senate committee assignments, which include chairing the Senate Agriculture Committee.

A Democrat, Hinchey defeated Republican Richard Amedure in November to fill the seat of now-retired Republican Senator George Amedore, Jr.

She took her Oath of Office in late December in a small ceremony in Albany. A virtual district-wide ceremony is scheduled for January 23, 2021.

“As we look to improve the resilience of our communities in the New Year, we need to recognize agriculture—our oldest and most



Photo contributed
Senator Michelle Hinchey (D-46) signs her oath of office.



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enduring sector—as a strong pillar for New York’s economic recovery and essential to the preservation of our natural resources,” she said. “We are so fortunate in New York State to produce a range of high-quality, locally grown foods alongside a flourishing farm-based craft beverage industry; I see enormous opportunity to expand markets for these homegrown goods to the benefit of our farm businesses and to our upstate economy.”

Hinchey represents the 46th District, which includes parts of Ulster, Albany and Schenectady counties, and all of Greene and Montgomery counties—and contains more than 1,000 farms.

“As Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, I am committed to doing all that I can to keep New York a vibrant agricultural state and ensure that our farmers and producers always have a seat at the table,” Hinchey said.

“In a district rich with farms, restaurants, craft beverage producers and more, I know she will be a strong partner in advocating for New York’s agricultural and food systems,” said Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo (D-

Binghamton), chair of the Assembly Agriculture Committee. “We have a lot of work ahead of us, helping farmers recover from devastating losses, while building the system back stronger.”

Mike Barcone, co-owner and operator of West Kill Brewing in Lexington, said that Hinchey “understands just how important our craft beverage industry is to New York’s agricultural sector and as a powerful engine of employment and economic growth to our upstate economy as a whole.”

“It’s heartening to witness Senator Hinchey’s genuine excitement for the industry,” said Barcone.

Gary Kleppel of Longfield Farm in Knox said Hinchey also “understands the important role that farms like ours can play in promoting a healthy environment while providing great food.”

“At Longfield Farm, we know that sustainability and agriculture go hand-in-hand,” said Kleppel. “I know she’ll be a strong advocate for the future of farming and will help support the numerous small and family-owned



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farms like mine in her district and across New York State.”

Hinchey will also serve on the Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, Commerce, Economic Development and Small Business, Energy and Telecommunications, Environmental Conservation, and Local Government committees.

“These committee assignments represent areas of significant importance to everyone across the

46th Senate District,” she said. “By protecting our environment, fighting the opioid epidemic, expanding broadband access and building back our Main Streets, we will create the conditions so that every individual has the opportunity to thrive.”

Hinchey, who resides in Saugerties, is the daughter of late former U.S. Rep. Maurice Hinchey who served 18 years in the state Assembly and 20 years in Congress.

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