

NEWS RENSSELAER COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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Zweig Testifies in Opposition to Closure of Rensselaer County's USDA Farm Service Agency Office

Rensselaer County Legislator Brian Zweig recently attended the public meeting held by USDA and the Farm Service Agency State Committee to voice his opposition to the proposed closure of Rensselaer County's Farm Service Agency Office.

"While the objective of reducing government spending is good, it appears that the proposal is penny-wise and pound foolish. The savings resulting from this proposal are very small when compared to the hardship that closing the Troy office will cause for Rensselaer County farmers," Zweig stated.

"Making farmers spend half a day traveling to a distant office will discourage participation in programs that help strengthen Rensselaer County's ag economy. Currently, a high percentage of Rensselaer County farmers participate in these programs. Without the support of a nearby Farm Service Agency Office, participation will likely decline and this will make our farmers less competitive and less economically viable," said Zweig.

"Likely the loss in economic benefit to the County will far outweigh any savings," Zweig added. Zweig concluded his comments by noting that there are other opportunities to achieve savings without closing the Troy office.

Zweig has personally discussed the closure of the Farm Service Agency Office with local Congresswoman Kirsten Gillibrand, who sits on the House Agriculture Committee and she has expressed her support for keeping Troy the office open. "We are fortunate to have Congresswoman Gillibrand representing us on the House Ag Committee. She is working on behalf of Rensselaer County farmers to keep our office open," noted Legislator Zweig.