



Dutchess County Young Republicans



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Fettes' Anti-Agriculture Vote Puts Politics Over the People She was Elected to Represent

County Legislator Margaret Fette's district includes the farm-rich towns of Washington, Amenia, Stanford and part of Pleasant Valley, yet when it came time to vote to keep agriculture's interests alive on the influential county Industrial Development Agency, Fettes voted against agriculture by voting to unseat agricultural expert David Teton of Stanford. Fette's vote is a disservice to the people for whom she was elected to represent.

Dave Teton, in addition to being one of Fettes' constituents, is also the vice president of the New York State Agricultural Society, dairy farm consultant, member of the Dutchess County Farm Bureau, member of the Dutchess County Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board, and Supervisor of Stanford. He had been a longtime advocate for agriculture on the IDA.

Teton was instrumental on the IDA in bringing the knowledge and leadership to properly support and maintain the farming industry in Dutchess County for the past 16 years. Teton had been serving as its Vice President of the IDA when Democrats in the Legislature voted him off on March 10.

Fettes' vote was crucial in the 13-12 vote. Had she sided with agriculture and with her constituent, Teton's agricultural forte would continue to guide Dutchess' industrial development. Yet Margaret Fettes ignored the needs of her farming constituents in the county's most heavily concentrated farm district.

While it is certainly within the right of the Legislature to vote for whom they see fit to the IDA, it is disingenuous to remove a talented, experienced leader, and not replace him with someone with equal or better agribusiness experience. Fettes and her fellow Democrats in the County Legislature turned their backs on the farmers of Dutchess County.

Teton's removal is conceded by both sides of the political aisle as a means to add more Democrats to the IDA board composition. Fettes – who also holds the political Democratic leadership position of Assistant Majority Leader which carries with it a \$7,000 bonus-pay on top of the average legislator pay – should remember the interest of the people she represents rather than allow it to be

superseded by the job expectations of her party. The people of Amenia, Washington, Stanford and Pleasant Valley elected someone to represent their needs, not those of the County Democratic Party.

Unfortunately, as the failures continue to mount for the Democrat Majority in the legislature, the residents of Dutchess County – and in this instance the farmers – are the ones left to suffer from these bad decisions. Margaret Fettes needs to stand up for her constituents and for agriculture, and not allow them to be trampled underfoot by the County Democratic Party machine.

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