STATE OF NEW YORK

10801

IN ASSEMBLY

April 1, 2026

Introduced by M. of A. NOVAKHOV -- read once and referred to the Committee on Governmental Operations

AN ACT to amend the executive law, in relation to clarifying the limits of municipal authority regarding grocery price controls and prohibit non-emergency local regulations that interfere with food supply systems in the state of New York

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Legislative findings and intent. The legislature finds that artificially freezing grocery prices below market rates causes grocery stores to reduce payments to suppliers and farmers, who are often unable to continue producing food at a loss. Countries and cities that implemented long-term price controls have experienced sharp declines in domestic food production, supply shortages, hunger crises, and the rise of black markets. In Venezuela, Soviet-era Ukraine, Zimbabwe, and others, government price mandates led directly to farm abandonment, food rationing, and chronic scarcity, disproportionately harming working-class and rural populations. A municipally run grocery system with price mandates discourages innovation, prevents sustainable farming, and disincentivizes private investment in agriculture, logistics, and retail. Government resources are better allocated toward expanding SNAP benefits, subsidizing food infrastructure, and directly assisting households in need, rather than suppressing prices in a way that harms supply. Section 24 of the executive law grants local leaders temporary emergency powers, not permanent economic control, and should not be used to override agricultural or market stability outside of those clear bounds.

§ 2. The executive law is amended by adding a new section 24-a to read as follows:

§ 24-a. Clarification of emergency powers. 1. (a) No city, county, municipality, or local government subdivision in New York shall enact or enforce any law, ordinance, or executive order that freezes, caps, or sets maximum grocery prices unless:

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

LBD15138-01-6

(i) a state of emergency has been declared under section twenty-four of this article; and

(ii) the regulation is issued in accordance with such emergency authority.

(b) Any local action outside the limits of section twenty-four of this article shall be null and void.

2. Nothing in this act shall be construed to limit the governor's or local chief executives' authority under section twenty-four of this article to regulate prices during a formally declared emergency. All such orders shall be limited in scope and duration as defined by such statute.

§ 3. Severability. If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section or part of this act shall be adjudged by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section or part thereof directly involved in the controversy in which such judgment shall have been rendered. It is hereby declared to be the intent of the legislature that this act would have been enacted even if such invalid provisions had not been included herein.

§ 4. This act shall take effect immediately.