

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:

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

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

22 § 24-a. Clarification of emergency powers. 1. (a) No city, county,
23 municipality, or local government subdivision in New York shall enact or
24 enforce any law, ordinance, or executive order that freezes, caps, or
25 sets maximum grocery prices unless:

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

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

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

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

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

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

21 § 4. This act shall take effect immediately.