

RESOLUTION # 12

LOW-HANGING CABLES

1 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey farmers and their employees often operate large,
2 mobile equipment and trucks, on the farm and on the road; and

3 **WHEREAS**, operators of farm equipment and trucks take very seriously their role
4 in preventing accidents, as any injuries from such accidents can have severe negative
5 impacts to farm operations; and

6 **WHEREAS**, in recent years, multiple incidents have occurred in New Jersey
7 involving farm harvesting equipment coming into contact with low-hanging utility cables
8 along roads; and

9 **WHEREAS**, at least one of these incidents involved harvesting equipment
10 inadvertently pulling down utility poles and lines that provided power to approximately 30
11 homes; and

12 **WHEREAS**, incidents like this can have tragic consequences, and in fact
13 resulted in the deaths of two farmers in the process of harvesting grain in Elmer, New
14 Jersey, several years ago; and

15 **WHEREAS**, this is an issue that affects not only the agricultural community, but
16 all truckers, as tractor trailers can likewise become entangled in low-hanging cables.

17 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 101st
18 State Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on February 10-
19 11, 2016, do hereby request that the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU)
20 require all utility providers whose cables run alongside or across New Jersey roads to
21 maintain their cables at appropriate heights, depending upon current applicable
22 standards in New Jersey, as directed by NJAC 16:25-5.3(a) which defers to the National
23 Electric Safety Code Rule 232, which calls for minimums of 15.5 feet for communication

24 wires, 16 feet or higher for electric wires and to maintain them, where no standards
25 apply, at an adequate height so as to avoid accidents with trucks or farm equipment.

26 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we request the Department to work with the
27 NJBPU to provide a means of reporting low wires and to follow up on the raising of these
28 low wires in a reasonable period of time.

29 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that efforts involving the Department and NJBPU
30 should also establish that incidents involving low-hanging wires in which farm
31 equipment, trucks or other machinery contact low-hanging wires should be considered
32 the sole fault of the utility that allowed the wires to hang below the required height.

33 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the NJBPU establish an inspection program
34 to ensure utility line height compliance by utilities.