



Connecticut Farm Bureau Association, Inc.

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March 16, 2009

Re: **SUPPORT FOR S. B. No. 793 AN ACT CONCERNING STEAP GRANTS AND
THE CONVERSION OF PRIME FARMLAND TO NONAGRICULTURAL USE.**

Submitted by: Steven K. Reviczky, Executive Director, Connecticut Farm Bureau Association

The following testimony is submitted on behalf of the Connecticut Farm Bureau, a statewide nonprofit membership organization of nearly 5,000 families dedicated to farmers and the future of Connecticut agriculture.

Representative Roy, Senator Meyer and members of the Environment Committee,

Connecticut Farm Bureau strongly supports the preservation of prime and important farmland. Unfortunately, some projects funded under the Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) convert these lands to nonagricultural uses. Timely review of STEAP projects by the Commissioner of Agriculture would enable the consideration of information that is important to the future of Connecticut agriculture and the protection of our farmland. SB 793 would require the Commissioner of Agriculture to file a report with the Office of Policy and Management may help steer STEAP projects in a positive direction, enabling decision makers to fully consider alternatives that lessen negative impacts on farmland and the ability to farm particular farm properties.

The State of Connecticut invests millions of dollars for the purchase of developments rights of agricultural lands every year. Proper review and consideration of STEAP projects that might convert finite prime and important agricultural land to nonagricultural uses is a necessary step that should be taken when spending scarce state dollars.

CT Farm Bureau respectfully requests your support of S.B. No. 793 An Act Concerning STEAP Grants and the Conversion of Prime Farmland to Nonagricultural Use.