



**Connecticut Farm Bureau Association, Inc.**

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March 16, 2009

Re: **SUPPORT FOR S. B. No. 1082 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRESERVATION OF STATE-OWNED AGRICULTURAL LAND.**

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

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*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 supports S.B. 1082. The legislation calls for a thoughtful review of state-owned agricultural lands and consideration of permanently protecting state-owned prime and important farmland, where appropriate. The bill envisions a review be conducted by the statutorily constituted State Farmland Preservation Advisory Board and make recommendations to the Commissioner of Agriculture.

The State of Connecticut invests millions of dollars for the purchase of developments rights to agricultural lands every year and supports farming and agriculture through a variety of important programs. Proper review and consideration of the long term use of these state-owned prime and important agricultural lands is an essential component of the State's goal of protecting 130,000 acres of farmland of which 85,000 are targeted to be prime and important farmland soils. Conversion of state-owned farmland to nonagricultural uses takes use further away from this goal. This is a necessary and logical step that Connecticut should take in light of the scarcity state, local and federal dollars.

CT Farm Bureau suggests that Section 1 (2) should be amended to include the Department of Agriculture. The bill should be explicit that the land's use, under the conservation easement, be limited to agriculture as defined in CGS 1-1(q).

**CT Farm Bureau respectfully requests your support of S.B. No. 1082 An Act Concerning the Preservation of State-Owned Agricultural Land.**