



# TOWN OF SUFFIELD

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Selectmen's Office

March 8, 2010

TO: Senator Toni Nathaniel Harp, Representative John Geragosian, and Members of the  
Appropriation Committee  
RE: Community Investment Act

The Town of Suffield urges the Appropriations Committee to preserve the funds provided by the Community Investment Act for farmland preservation, as well as historic preservation that are the subject of the Governor's budget mitigation plan. The Town of Suffield has been very proactive in farmland preservation over the course of the last ten years. CIA funds have been instrumental in preserving 250 acres in our community that were matched with \$780,000 in local funds. We have twenty additional farms representing 1685 acres on a waiting list for preservation. It is absolutely critical that we have a reliable source of funding for these preservation efforts. The Town has also receive two Farm Viability Grants that have been utilized to: 1) better map farms and open space on GIS, 2) fund appraisals and surveys necessary for farmland preservation projects; and 3) to enhance our Suffield Farmers Market which takes place on our Town Green every Saturday from June through mid-October providing our residents with fresh, local produce. It is important to note that:

1. CIA is a dedicated fund fueled by a deed fee; it is NOT a part of the General Fund.
2. CIA is an innovative source of funding for affordable housing, open space, historic preservation, and agriculture.
3. CIA provides \$1 million funding annually for the CT Agriculture Viability Grants Program, \$100,000 annually for CT-Grown marketing program, \$75,000 for the CT Farm-Link Program.
4. Between 2009-2011, CIA funds will be a vital source of dairy support funding that will help keep over 70,000 acres of farmland in active agricultural use.
5. CIA pays for 3 of 5 staff in the CT Farmland Preservation Program. Without these staff positions the program will fall back to its historically slow pace of processing applications.
6. CIA pays for surveys and appraisals (non-capital expenditures) required to process farm applications.
7. Provides a small but reliable source of funding, unlike erratic bonding commitments.

For the reasons stated above we recommend that the CIA funding be preserved. Should you have any questions or concerns then please contact me at 860-668-3838 or Patrick McMahon, our Director of Economic and Community Development at 860-668-3849.

Sincerely,

Thomas W. Frenaye  
First Selectman