

Testimony in Favor of HB #6262 An Act Concerning the Community Investment Act
Chairman Meyers and Chairman Roy:
Members of the Environment Committee:

I am here today representing farmers though out the state, Connecticut Farm Bureau, Very Alive, even farmers who have taken their time to either send testimony or to appear here today. I know if you talk to a dairyman today they are extremely thankful of what has been done. Most feel embarrassed to be back here to testify. Most farmers will complain to each other but neighbor farms are not as close as they once were and that doesn't accomplish anything.

It is extremely important to remove the sunset provision in the Community Investment Act. This is a state safety net for the state's dairy farmers. Until the federal government finds a way that Connecticut's dairy farmers get a fair price for their milk, it's extremely important that the state of Connecticut recognize the value of its farms. What has been done in the legislature in the past few years has made a tremendous difference in keeping farms in Connecticut and keeping farmers from leaving their land and the state. The importance of a local food supply and fresh milk for the citizens of Connecticut should be a priority of the legislature.

This past winter brings the point even closer to Connecticut residents who rush to the store in the advent of each snow storm.

Many of you may be aware of the high oil prices on top of us again. Having a food supply that is close to consumers is even more important as transportation costs increase. Having a volatile market that is threatening the food supply is not good for having all your food shipped in from some far away place.

One thing that is sorely needed in Connecticut is jobs. The dairy farmers of Connecticut provide jobs. Many more jobs than you might realize, not just jobs on each farm but all our dollars are invested right back into our communities, plumbers, electricians, contractors, truckers etc. and the list goes on. This is probably one of the few professions where most of what we do is saving the environment.

We are stewards of the soil, protect open spaces, provide jobs, insure you have a safe food supply and still pay taxes.

Thank you,

Paul J. Miller
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