

**Testimony of the
Connecticut Department of Agriculture
Presented to the General Law Committee**

2/8/11

Senate Raised Bill 866

AN ACT CONCERNING CONNECTICUT WINE FESTIVALS

The Department has submitted a similar bill to the Environment Committee at the behest of The Connecticut Farm Wine Development Council.

This bill will assist in the promotion of Connecticut produced wines by allowing for wine festivals in both eastern and western Connecticut, thereby building awareness and enhancing the image of Connecticut wines. Connecticut wineries comprise over 2,000 acres of open space and are visited by over 500,000 travelers a year searching for locally produced wines. Our wineries are a critical component of our magnificent vistas and local economy. This bill will allow CT wine producers to expand the sales of wine to a greater audience, assist in the broadening awareness of the quality of Connecticut wines and help make the wineries more economically viable. The Connecticut Department of Agriculture urges your support for SB 866. Thank you for your consideration.