AN ACT AUTHORIZING LOCAL AND REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL COUNCILS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. (NEW) (Effective October 1, 2011) (a) Any municipality may, by vote of its legislative body or, in a municipality where the legislative body is a town meeting, by vote of the board of selectmen, establish a local agricultural council to: (1) Provide information to local farmers and to municipal boards and commissions about the benefits of a balance between agriculture and other land uses; (2) educate municipal officials about agricultural laws and safety issues; (3) identify grant sources for farmers and municipalities; (4) enable a common understanding of agriculture among all municipal departments; (5) provide information and guidance about zoning issues relating to agriculture; (6) support local, regional and state vocational agricultural programs concerning agricultural matters; (7) provide conflict resolution and advisory services; (8) identify innovative opportunities for agriculture; and (9) create a climate that supports the economic viability of agriculture in the municipality.

(b) Any two or more municipalities may form a regional
agricultural council for the purposes set forth in subsection (a) of this section by vote of the legislative body or, in a municipality where the legislative body is a town meeting, by vote of the board of selectmen, of each municipality.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

| Section 1 | October 1, 2011 | New section |

**PD** Joint Favorable