

In support of H.B. 5202, Bonding for Farmland Preservation

Regardless of whether you believe that climate change is caused by humans or not, the Earth is warming. This means that our nation's food supply will change dramatically in the near future – it has already begun to change:

- Western snow packs that supply the great agricultural areas of California have permanently dwindled, so there is competition between the cities and the growers.
- The insurance industry in this country has raised several alerts about increasing numbers of hurricanes, tornadoes, and other weather disasters that have wreaked havoc on agriculture in the South.
- Flooding has become an increasing and perennial problem in key farming areas of the North.

The insurance industry has spent millions of dollars on research that indicates that the problem is here for the long term.

The smart response is to support farmland preservation in Connecticut now.

- We are less subject to the disasters causing crop losses in other parts of the country.
- Our growing season has lengthened and become warmer, allowing Connecticut to grow a greater variety of crops, in greater abundance.
- Increasing demand for local food has surpassed what Connecticut's farms are capable of producing now – to allow more farmland to disappear is economically foolish!
- Farmland taxes support town budgets. Farms pay far more in taxes than they require in services.

Our farming is popular with the public, but land prices are so exorbitant that farmers can't afford to expand farms in competition with developers. And rising land costs mean higher property taxes that farmers can't afford to pay.

An important part of the solution is to stabilize fertile farmland prices through farmland preservation easements, purchased in part through state bonding.

Bonding for Farmland Preservation gives Connecticut residents what they want and need – affordable, more nutritious food that is less subject to the diseases found in large agribusinesses. Preserving farms aids town budgets and doesn't raise any new taxes. This is a win in every possible way!

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