

Proposed Bill No. 385 An Act excluding Start-up Farmers who are Veterans from the Sales and Use Tax

Testimony February 19, 2013 Joint Committee on Veterans Affairs

David B. Fairman
2 Exeter Court
Mystic, CT 06355
DBFairman99@yahoo.com
860 857-1269

I am a Vietnam era Navy submarine veteran and former Waterford Selectman.

The submarine base narrowly survived closing in the last two Base Reassignment and Closure Committees (BRAC). A significant disadvantage is the three bridges between the base and open water.

Five years ago the Department of Homeland Security noted that Eastern Connecticut has only a three day supply of food.

Our agricultural capacity diminished during World War II when many farmers went to work in the defense industry, giving up full time farming.

Fearing that local agricultural capacity might become a factor in a future BRAC, I have been working to rebuild our local capacity. Our submarine base competitors in Georgia and Washington have strong agricultural economies.

Thames Valley Local Produce helps farmers expand their production and distribution and has sourced dinners to benefit the Connecticut Farmland Trust.

The Eastern Connecticut Community Gardens Association (GetGrowingCT.org) has worked with local groups to start more than 80 gardens in the last 3 years. We also glean for the benefit of food banks. We have provided raised bed gardens to a homeless veteran's house and held preservation work parties for several veterans' houses.

Many local farmers are elderly and younger farmers are needed. Illinois, New Mexico and California have programs for helping veterans get into farming.

I support SB 385 as a way to help save the subbase, employ veterans, improve our economy, and improve food security, quality and our health.