



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER



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Testimony presented to the Environment Committee of

The Connecticut General Assembly

By the Connecticut Department of Agriculture

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**S.B. 806 – AN ACT CONCERNING THE MUNICIPAL PURCHASE OF
DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS FOR AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION**

Chairmen Meyer and Gentile, Vice Chairs Maynard and Albis, Ranking Members Chapin and Shaban and members of the Environment Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

The Department of Agriculture considers this a technical change meant to bring the Municipal Purchase of Development Rights statute into conformity with the joint ownership statutes of the Department of Agriculture.

The Farmland Preservation Program was created in 1978 and codified in CGS Section 22-26cc. Subsection (h) specifically allows the state to acquire or accept as a gift the right of the owner to construct any residences or any farm structures on the agricultural land. Subsection (e) provides for a joint municipal and state purchase of developments rights.

We have discovered, however, that the municipal statute under CGS Section 7-131q allowing municipalities to create agricultural land preservation funds does not specifically provide for municipalities to acquire or accept as a gift the right of the owner to construct any residences or any farm structures on the agricultural land. The proposed bill would allow for this change.

Recently, the bond council for one municipality did not approve bonding for a joint project because the agreement called for the farmer to convey his right to build a house and farm structures, along with the development rights. The proposed bill would prevent this scenario from occurring again.

The Department of Agriculture respectfully requests this change.