

Dear Planning and Development Committee,

My name is Fred Mastele and I reside in Durham, CT. I currently serve as President of the CT Horse Council, I'm on the CT Equine Advisory Council, and I'm the Chairman of the Durham Ag Commission. Personally, and on behalf of the organizations I represent I would like to encourage the Committee to approve HB-5057. It would be beneficial to farmers and horse/pony owners alike.

A few years ago CT had the distinction of having more horses per capita than any of the other states. In the past 10 to 15 years we have had a mass exodus of horse owners due to several economic factors including the taxation of horses/ponies. A tax exemption for horses and ponies would help alleviate a portion of the financial burden that horse owners already face with the rising cost of feed, hay, fuel, etc.

Again, I would like to encourage the Committee to approve HB-5057 AN ACT CONCERNING THE ASSESSMENT OF HORSES AND PONIES AND FARM MACHINERY AND THE TRANSFER OF LAND CLASSIFIED AS FARM LAND, OPEN SPACE LAND, FOREST LAND AND MARINE HERITAGE LAND.

To authorize municipalities, by local option, to exempt all horses and ponies from property taxation; to increase the property tax exemption for farm machinery; to amend the date on which a qualified foresters report must be submitted; to require property owners to provide notice of an excepted transfer of land classified as farm land, open space land, forest land or maritime heritage land, and to make other changes concerning the assessment of such classified land.

Respectfully,
Frederick J. Mastele