

To the Members of the Appropriations Committee:

As the operations Manager of Cushman Farms, I understand firsthand the impact the Community Investment Act has on a dairy farm. Cushman Farm employees 26 people to care for the 2400 dairy animals and work the 2000 acres of land used to raise 70 percent of the feed. We purchase the other 30 percent from the Midwest because of the limited land base in Connecticut. These purchases are part of the reason for the higher cost of producing milk in our state. The lighter load limit cost .20/hundred pounds. This is an additional annual cost of fourteen thousand dollars for the average farm to transport our milk to process that farmer in other states do not have to pay.

The CIA funds help level the playing field for us to compete with farms in other parts of the country. Milk is priced by the federal government and is impacted by world markets. We not only have to deal with the higher cost of production, but also the uncertainty of world politics and weather. The University of Connecticut did a study and found that the cost of the production of milk in Connecticut to be close to \$30 per hundredweight. Currently the price the farmer gets in April 2015 is \$16.53 per hundredweight. That's a loss of \$13.47 per hundredweight without such funds as the CIA.

The funds from Community Investment Act are an economic stimulus. There are over forty vendors that dairy farms use and send a check to each month. The funds are filtered directly back to the community. To take the funds that were never intended to be part of the budget and are an economic stimulus is just short sighted. We can't solve the budget problems with same level of thinking that created them.

James Smith  
Operations Manager  
Cushman Farms  
Franklin, Connecticut