

Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee

I would like to thank you for this opportunity to testify on behalf of Commissioner Reviczky. The last four years have been very positive for Connecticut agriculture. My family operates Cushman Farms, a dairy farm in Franklin, thus I have a close connection with agriculture in the state. Over the past 25 years our farm has preserved over 1700 acres of land in Connecticut's Farmland Preservation Program. This has allowed us to grow and help us to ensure that the farm is sustainable for future generation. We presently have the fifth generation working on the farm.

Commissioner Reviczky has a vast understanding of agriculture, its challenges, and opportunities. He has been involved in agriculture for over 20 years, working for the Department of Agriculture in Farmland Preservation, as the Executive Director of Connecticut Farm Bureau, and over the last four years, as the Commissioner of Agriculture for the State of Connecticut. Under the Commissioner's leadership we have a Department of Agriculture we can all be proud of. With his strong understanding of agriculture, Commissioner Reviczky has been able to maintain an open working relationship with our Governor and readily provides a true assessment of any situation.

The Commissioner's promotion of agriculture and state programs has had a positive effect in agriculture growth within Connecticut. Since there is a very strong interest from the younger generation seeking properties for start up farms, the department is ramping up the Farmlink Program. This is a program that links interested future stewards of the land with older farmers in hopes to transition the farm into these energetic, interested parties.

In addition Commissioner Reviczky has promoted and implemented the Governors 5 million dollar farmland restoration program, which has reclaimed over 1300 acres. Commissioner Revizsky also pushes ahead with the Governors Council on Agriculture Development. Furthermore as commissioner he has developed a master plan to modernize the regional market and make it more effective to the Connecticut's needs. Presently he has 70 farms averaging 100 acre per farm, in the line to get preserved. He worked with a new department head in Farmland Preservation to streamline the system to complete the process quicker. Ladies and gentleman, this is leadership in action. Commissioner Revizsky has a vision for the future of agriculture in Connecticut. That's why we are growing faster then any other New England state.

Respectfully

James A Smith