



“Preserving Family Farm History”

To State of CT Finance, Revenue & Bonding Committee

From: Nancy Strong, 274 West Street, Vernon CT

Re: Community Investment Act Cuts

Honorable Sirs:

It took a long time for the State of Connecticut to put into place a financial commitment to historic preservation, farmland, open space and affordable housing. Now that programs have been formulated and implemented, the new budget proposes to cut the funding of these programs and divert funds away from the purpose that they were created for. So much will be lost. Our farm is an excellent example on how these programs have helped farmers in our State in the past years. If not for the help and guidance we received, we would not be moving forward and be the community farm that we are today.

The Strong farm has been in existence for over 150 years in Vernon. My father passed away in 2010 and none of our family is willing or able to carry on the farming tradition, yet we don't want to see the farm subdivided and the barn that my grandfather built be torn down. In the past years, thanks to programs funded by the Community Investment Act, we have collaborated with the CT Farmland Trust and received a Barn Grants from the CT Trust for Historic Preservation for a feasibility study, conditions study and structural support that will guide us in the future. Both programs have helped us to begin to formulate a plan for the future of the Strong Farm. We want to develop a program for the farm to continue and give back to the community and the State. We are hoping to take further advantage of these programs that are funded by the Community Investment Act and the help of the experts funded by the program to support our farm as a 501(c)3 nonprofit historic agricultural education center.

Without the funding, the experts will be laid off. Without this funding, many other farms will be lost and barns will go to waste. Without the funding created to support us, so much will be lost that makes Connecticut a special place to live. I hope you will let the recording fees collected go to where they were created to go – historic preservation, protecting open space, preserving farmland and creating affordable housing.

Thank you,

Nancy Strong

3/3/15