



Co-Chairs
Senator Terry Gerratana
Connecticut

RESOLUTION # AG-2017-01

Representative Kevin Ryan
Deputy Speaker
Connecticut

RESOLUTION ON REAUTHORIZATION OF THE FARM BILL

Director
Wendell M. Hannaford

Whereas, the Council of State Governments' Eastern Regional Conference (CSG/ERC) is comprised of 11 Eastern states from Maine to Maryland, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, and five Eastern Canadian Provinces; and

Whereas, the Northeast States Association for Agricultural Stewardship (NSAAS) is a CSG/ERC affiliate organization representing state and provincial agricultural and rural policy leaders in CSG's Eastern Region; and

Whereas, one of NSAAS's principles is to provide a unified voice for ERC member state officials on agriculture and rural communities in Federal legislation; and

Whereas, the Farm Bill supports the farmers, forest owners, food security, natural resources, wildlife habitat, rural communities and the 52 million citizens in our region who deserve access to fresh food and a clean environment;

Therefore Be It Resolved, that the dairy industry is very important to our region, and our dairy farmers need a strong and secure safety net in order to weather the vagaries of market prices and crop conditions. It is critical to have a Margin Protection Program that takes this, and our higher feed costs, into consideration; and

Be It Further Resolved, that the Farm Bill reauthorization includes a domestic hunger and nutrition safety net, in recognition that Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program includes nutrition assistance program for victims of hurricanes, floods and other disasters, that more than \$100 million in SNAP benefits are redeemed at military commissaries annually and that rural residents have the highest percentage of households receiving SNAP and farmers receive approximately 20% of the money spent on SNAP benefits; and

Be It Further Resolved, that only 55 percent of people living in rural areas have access to speeds that qualify as broadband, compared to 94 percent of the urban population. Therefore, in order to ensure that rural residents have the same economic opportunity as those in urban areas that results from high speed internet access, we request that broadband be expanded; and

Be It Further Resolved, that Specialty Crops are the primary products of most northeastern farms and that NSAAS strongly urges the continuation of Specialty Block Grants, and ask that there be an increase, not a reduction, in funding, demonstrating a strong support for small family farms; and

Be It Further Resolved, that NSAAS continues its support for federal funding, through the Farm Bill, for Conservation Best Management practices and Nutrient Management in support of water quality and the larger environment where farms exist and further downstream. We further resolve that programs such as TDML, EQIP and CREP are important to this effort and need to be funded; and

Be It Further Resolved, that the Northeast is the home of the Local Food Movement, Organic Food Production, and the small neighborhood producers so important to that local food movement. We ask that funding for organic programs and research continue through this farm bill; and

Be It Further Resolved, that Northeastern policy makers suggest that the policy in the 2014 Farm Bill to allow Hemp Research through Land Grant Universities be now expanded to allow commercial growing and processing of hemp; and

Be It Further Resolved, that, through the Farm Bill, we strongly support sustainability of our poultry and grain processors; and

Be It Further Resolved, that this resolution be submitted to appropriate state, federal and provincial officials.

**Adopted August 16 at the CSG/ERC Annual Meeting and Policy Forum,
Uncasville, Connecticut**