



TESTIMONY **IN SUPPORT** OF
SB 243 AAC CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES

To: Honored Co-Chairs Sen. Cohen and Rep. Gresko, Vice Chairs Sen. Slap and Rep. Palm, Ranking Members Sen. Miner and Rep. Harding, Distinguished Members of the Environment Committee

From: Lori Brown, Executive Director, Connecticut League of Conservation Voters

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony **IN SUPPORT** of SB 243 AAC CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES. This bill incentivizes climate-smart agricultural practices, with priority funding given to Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) and new and beginning farmers.

Farmers play a critical role in combating the adverse effects of climate change. This bill follows the recommendations included in the [Governor's Council on Climate Change](#) (GC3) phase one report's section on Working and Natural Lands. Implementing climate-smart practices, like maintaining healthy soil, utilizing legume cover crops, and spreading more compost, sequesters carbon from the atmosphere. According to the [Working Lands Alliance](#) (WLA), if 100% of Connecticut farms incorporated these practices it would remove enough carbon from the atmosphere to **equal taking 20,500 cars off the road annually.**

Priority funding for BIPOC and new farmers ensures that these **historically disadvantaged groups can have viable farming careers rooted in climate-smart practices.** Currently, 31% of producers in the state are 65 or older while 27% percent of farmers in the state are young and beginning farmers. Not only do these numbers show that farmland is at risk for being purchased and developed, but also that there is potential for a new generation of diverse farmers to inherit an important undertaking. This bill is an opportunity for equity, as less than 3% of farmers and producers in Connecticut are BIPOC while 20% of Connecticut residents are BIPOC.

CTLCV fully supports this legislation that highlights the intersection of climate change mitigation and agriculture. We defer to the expertise provided by the WLA, the GC3, farmers, and soil scientists regarding technical information supporting this bill. Thank you for your consideration.

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