



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1217

Resolution calling on the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate to pass and for the President to sign into law S. 1773/ H.R. 3286, the Local Farms, Food and Jobs Act of 2011.

By Council Members Brewer, Chin, James, Koppell, Lander, Rose and Palma

Whereas, On November 1, 2011, United States Senator Sherrod Brown and United States Representative Chellie Pingree along with 35 original co-sponsors introduced the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act (S. 1773, H.R. 3286), a comprehensive bill intended for inclusion in the 2012 Farm Bill; and

Whereas, The legislation seeks to help farmers and ranchers address production, aggregation, processing, marketing, and distribution needs to access growing local and regional food markets; and

Whereas, This measure would also provide funding to help farmers build the infrastructure to process and sell their food locally; and

Whereas, The bill also seeks to assist consumers by improving access to healthy food; and

Whereas, The legislation would require the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to continue conducting traditional seed research, not just research on genetically modified seeds; and

Whereas, The bill calls for the creation of a new crop insurance program tailored to the needs of organic farmers and farmers with diversified crops who often meet with challenges when attempting to access traditional crop insurance; and

Whereas, If enacted, this legislation would also break down barriers for schools and institutions to procure local food more easily by providing schools with a local school credit to purchase local foods; and

Whereas, According a to recent report by the Union of Concerned Scientists, the over consumption of unhealthy processed foods contributes to Americans' increased rates of weight gain and obesity, has

considerable health consequences and many additional associated societal costs; and

Whereas, This legislation would encourage direct marketing channels, such as farmers' markets, which are essential to stimulating rural economies as a greater percentage of the sales revenue is retained locally; and

Whereas, The legislation would also authorize a pilot program to test smart phone technology to accept food stamp benefits at farmers' markets which would make it easier for food stamp recipients to spend their money at farmers' markets; and

Whereas, If enacted, the measure would provide secure farm funding for critically important programs that support family farms, expand new farming opportunities, create rural jobs, and invest in the local food and agriculture economy; and

Whereas, According to the USDA the average farm size in New York state diminished from 204 acres in 1007 to 197 acres in 2007; and

Whereas, Over the same period, total cropland in New York state also declined from 4,961,538 to 4,314,954 acres; and

Whereas, Making it easier for farmers to sell food locally and easier for consumers to buy nutritious food advances the mission of securing a healthy environment for future generations of New York City residents; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate to pass and for the President to sign into law

S. 1773/ H.R. 3286, the Local Farms, Food and Jobs Act of 2011.

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