SENATE No. 571

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Edward J. Kennedy

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying resolve:

Resolve to diversify farmland opportunities to combat climate change.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
Edward J. Kennedy	First Middlesex	
Joanne M. Comerford	Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester	3/30/2021

SENATE No. 571

By Mr. Kennedy, a petition (accompanied by resolve, Senate, No. 571) of Edward J. Kennedy and Joanne M. Comerford for legislation to diversify farmland opportunities to combat climate change. Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture.

The Commonwealth of Alassachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court (2021-2022)

Resolve to diversify farmland opportunities to combat climate change.

Resolved, There shall be a special commission to examine opportunities for

Massachusetts farms and agricultural lands to play a larger role in the Commonwealth's response

to climate change and to propose laws and policy changes to incentivize these actions.

4 The commission shall be tasked with examining the use of composting including the

potential for the establishment of a statewide grid of composting sites run by licensed operators

that receive local feedstocks. This network would be tasked with tracking the carbon content of

their compost as it is moved into farm soils. The commission shall also study the impact of

increasing the amount of organic feedstock being composted and sequestered in farm soils, turf

areas, and forest lands. The commission can also examine if farms should receive a priority in

access to supplies, receive technical supports and financial subsidies to make decarbonization

central to their operations. The commission shall also be tasked with developing metrics for

increasing carbon soil content over an established base line over 5 year intervals in order to

provide efficacy data for carbon stored.

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The Commission shall consist of 9 members: 1 of whom shall be the Commissioner of the Department of Agricultural Resources or his designee who shall serve as Chairman, Commission, 1 of whom shall be a representative of the Massachusetts Municipal Association; 1 of whom shall be a representative of the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation, 2 of whom shall be the respective House and Senate Chairs of the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture, and 4 members appointed by the Governor who are involved in various agricultural activities. The commission shall convene its first meeting not later than June 1, 2021 and shall file a report along with any recommendations for legislative reform not later than October 31, 2021 with the Clerks of the Senate and House of Representatives, the chairs of the Senate and House committees on Ways and Means, and the chairs of the joint committee on Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture.