

State of Vermont

Senate Chamber



Montpelier, Vermont

Senate Resolution

By the Committee on Agriculture,

S.R. 18. Senate resolution urgently imploring United States Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack to exercise dynamic and innovative leadership in addressing the volatility in the price of milk paid to Vermont's dairy farmers.

Whereas, the federal marketing order system no longer works for Vermont dairy farmers, and

Whereas, the price of milk is consistently below the price of production and is a major cause in the decline in the number of Vermont dairy farms, and

Whereas, according to the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, the total number of dairy farms in January of each of the following years stood at: 1947 (11,206), 1957 (9,512), 1967 (4,729), 1977 (3,531), 1987 (2,771), 1997 (1,908), 2007 (1,168), and 2010 (1,055), and

Whereas, if the statistical dairy farm closure rate of the last two decades continues, by the year 2020 Vermont dairy farms will have nearly vanished from the countryside, and

Whereas, the state of Vermont has attempted through various programs, including initiating a regional dairy compact, to revitalize the Vermont Milk Commission, and to provide scientific and business assistance directly to individual farmers, and through agricultural organizations to help create a fair price for the milk that Vermont dairy farmers produce, and

Whereas, this pricing problem not only is an ongoing crisis for our dairy farmers, but also it is national in scope and can be addressed only through federal leadership which takes into consideration policy proposals that come from the grass roots level, and

Whereas, on Saturday, February 13, 2010, United States Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack will be visiting our state, affording Vermont's dairy farmers and the members of the Vermont Senate the opportunity to express frustration and deep concern regarding the future of Vermont's dairy industry, a major economic driver of our state, and

Whereas, this expression will be a way of recognizing and protecting our agricultural heritage and working landscape, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate:

That the Senate of the State of Vermont welcomes United States Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack to Vermont and urgently implores him to exercise dynamic and innovative leadership in addressing the volatility in the price of milk paid to Vermont's dairy farmers, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of the Senate be directed to send a copy of this resolution to United States Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ATTESTED TO:

David A. Gibson
Secretary of the Senate

DATE: _____