

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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123rd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2007

Legislative Document

No. 1414

H.P. 997

House of Representatives, March 14, 2007

An Act To Support Farms and Limit Sprawl

Reference to the Committee on Taxation suggested and ordered printed.

Millicent M. MacFarland
MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND
Clerk

Presented by Representative PIOTTI of Unity.
Cosponsored by Representatives: MAREAN of Hollis, PIEH of Bremen, Senator: SHERMAN
of Aroostook.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 7 MRSA c. 2-C** is enacted to read:

3 **CHAPTER 2-C**

4 **VOLUNTARY MUNICIPAL FARM SUPPORT PROGRAM**

5 **§60. Definitions**

6 As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms
7 have the following meanings.

8 **1. Farm support arrangement.** "Farm support arrangement" means an
9 arrangement that meets requirements established by the department by rule under which:

10 A. The owner of qualified farmland grants to a municipality a qualified easement;
11 and

12 B. The municipality obligates itself to make farm support payments.

13 **2. Farm support payments.** "Farm support payments" means annual payments by a
14 municipality during the 30-year term of a qualified easement:

15 A. In an amount equal to 100% of the annual property taxes assessed by that
16 municipality against land and buildings subject to a qualified easement; and

17 B. To the person against whom the property taxes are assessed.

18 **3. Qualified easement.** "Qualified easement" means an agricultural conservation
19 easement held by a municipality on qualified farmland in that municipality that:

20 A. Meets standards adopted by rule by the department designed to ensure that no
21 development other than development related to agricultural use occurs on the
22 qualified farmland; and

23 B. Is limited to a term of 30 years.

24 **4. Qualified farmland.** "Qualified farmland" means farmland that meets eligibility
25 requirements established by the department by rule.

26 **§60-A. Program established**

27 **1. Program.** In order to protect and support local farms, preserve farmland and
28 reduce the potential tax burdens from new development, a municipality may enter into
29 farm support arrangements with the owners of qualified farmland.

30 A. A farm support arrangement must be approved by majority vote of the
31 municipality's legislative body.

32 B. Unless approved by a 2/3 vote of the municipality's legislative body, the
33 municipality may not enter into farm support arrangements:

