



WOLFE'S NECK CENTER

FOR AGRICULTURE & THE ENVIRONMENT

March 2, 2021

Written Testimony in Support of LD 437 – An Act To Establish the Maine Healthy Soils Program

I'm writing to express support for LD 437, An Act To Establish the Maine Healthy Soils Program. Soil is the basis for all life on earth and there is growing consensus that a coordinated, global effort to improve agricultural soils worldwide is an essential step towards drawing down atmospheric carbon responsible for climate change. Let's make sure that Maine is at the forefront of this critical movement. Doing so will put Maine farmers in a position to improve their financial viability, develop increased resilience to extreme weather events and enable them to take part in emerging markets for carbon and ecosystem services.

Our work at Wolfe's Neck Center is increasingly focused on ways to support and enhance the movement to expedite implementation of healthy soils farming practices locally, regionally and nationally. We, as a society, are increasingly asking farmers to produce more, better, healthier food and do so with tighter margins and the expectation that they are stewarding our shared natural resources in a way that benefits all of us. We absolutely need to find as many ways as possible to support farmers towards this end. LD 437 is an important step in this process. It will create a one-stop shop for farmers seeking healthy soils information including: healthy soils management practices; technical assistance services provided by both governmental and non-governmental entities; connections to farmers who are using these practices successfully; and funding opportunities to support the use of these practices. Additionally, the Program would have a fund associated with it that could receive state funding in future years, but, in the interim, could be a depository for any federal or philanthropic funding.

We are proud to be one of many organizations in Maine who are providing resources to help farmers implement healthy soils practices. LD 437 will help improve farmers' access to those resources and help put Maine and its dedicated farmers at the forefront of an essential global revolution: to improve soil health.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Herring
Executive Director

Transforming our relationship with farming and food for a healthier planet.

184 Burnett Road, Freeport, Maine 04032 · 207 865.4469 · WolfesNeck.org