

Allan Fortin
Fairfield

Dear Sir or Madame Chairperson of the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee.

I am a 47 year old resident of Fairfield, Maine and I have been involved with and in the dairy industry of Maine my entire life having grown up on a small dairy farm in Benton Maine and now as a Dairy Nutritionist with Feed Commodities International, a position I have worked in for the past 24 years. I hope that as you see it as favorably to pass this legislation supporting the tier support program LD 1805. While I and other members of the Maine Dairy Industry have come before this committee in the past there is no greater need for price support than there is at this time. With the Covid -19 pandemic producers have seen production caps limiting the amount of product they can sell, with financial penalties levied for over production, coupled with dramatically increased input costs due to labor shortages, increased transportation and other supply chain challenges brought fourth from the pandemic. I truly hope that a view of this committee is the continued support of local agriculture and the benefits an active farming base brings to our state, without support from this bill it makes succumbing to the opportunities of rural development that much more attractive which only adds to our tax costs and requires additional administrative costs to our government. With enacting this legislation our farmers are on a more even costs structure to Western Farms which do not have same amount of transportation costs on inputs and operating costs that we do here, which hopefully will make Dairy Farming a more enticing business activity for the younger generations on these farms.