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LD 901

I am writing in support of LD 901. I am a college student in Maine, and I have worked on multiple farms, in Maine and the Northeast, as an intern, apprentice, and volunteer. I believe that introducing young people to sustainable agriculture is of critical importance as we face a future of climate uncertainty in Maine. In order to support a future for local food and regenerative farming in Maine, we must support the education of bright young farmers by offering farms grant support for compensating apprentices.

In my experience working on farms, many interns were making financial sacrifices in order to spend time working and learning on regenerative farms. Farm apprenticeships are often financially precarious and are not currently a feasible option for college graduates with debt or loans. Offering funding support for farm apprenticeships would greatly expand the learning opportunities available in regenerative farming and make such experiences accessible to young folks without a financial safety net who require a living wage to support themselves, thus diversifying our agricultural workforce.

Again, I highly encourage the committee to support this bill. The future of Maine's food supply relies on supporting the development of a young workforce educated in sustainable and regenerative agriculture.