

SENATE No. 571

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Edward J. Kennedy

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying resolve:

Resolve to diversify farmland opportunities to combat climate change.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
<i>Edward J. Kennedy</i>	<i>First Middlesex</i>	
<i>Joanne M. Comerford</i>	<i>Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester</i>	<i>3/30/2021</i>

SENATE No. 571

By Mr. Kennedy, a petition (accompanied by resolve, Senate, No. 571) of Edward J. Kennedy and Joanne M. Comerford for legislation to diversify farmland opportunities to combat climate change. Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court
(2021-2022)

Resolve to diversify farmland opportunities to combat climate change.

1 **Resolved**, There shall be a special commission to examine opportunities for
2 Massachusetts farms and agricultural lands to play a larger role in the Commonwealth's response
3 to climate change and to propose laws and policy changes to incentivize these actions.

4 The commission shall be tasked with examining the use of composting including the
5 potential for the establishment of a statewide grid of composting sites run by licensed operators
6 that receive local feedstocks. This network would be tasked with tracking the carbon content of
7 their compost as it is moved into farm soils. The commission shall also study the impact of
8 increasing the amount of organic feedstock being composted and sequestered in farm soils, turf
9 areas, and forest lands. The commission can also examine if farms should receive a priority in
10 access to supplies, receive technical supports and financial subsidies to make decarbonization
11 central to their operations. The commission shall also be tasked with developing metrics for
12 increasing carbon soil content over an established base line over 5 year intervals in order to
13 provide efficacy data for carbon stored.

14 The Commission shall consist of 9 members: 1 of whom shall be the Commissioner of
15 the Department of Agricultural Resources or his designee who shall serve as Chairman,
16 Commission, 1 of whom shall be a representative of the Massachusetts Municipal Association; 1
17 of whom shall be a representative of the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation, 2 of whom
18 shall be the respective House and Senate Chairs of the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural
19 Resources, and Agriculture, and 4 members appointed by the Governor who are involved in
20 various agricultural activities. The commission shall convene its first meeting not later than June
21 1, 2021 and shall file a report along with any recommendations for legislative reform not later
22 than October 31, 2021 with the Clerks of the Senate and House of Representatives, the chairs of
23 the Senate and House committees on Ways and Means, and the chairs of the joint committee on
24 Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture.