HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 3621 FILED ON: 1/17/2025

HOUSE . . . . . No. 112

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Natalie M. Blais

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 bill:

An Act fostering agricultural resilience in Massachusetts.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
Natalie M. Blais	*1st Franklin*	*1/17/2025*
Lindsay N. Sabadosa	*1st Hampshire*	*1/25/2025*
Mindy Domb	*3rd Hampshire*	*1/25/2025*
Hannah Kane	*11th Worcester*	*2/2/2025*
Steven Ultrino	*33rd Middlesex*	*1/25/2025*
Joanne M. Comerford	*Hampshire, Franklin and Worcester*	*2/2/2025*
Danillo A. Sena	*37th Middlesex*	*2/2/2025*
Erika Uyterhoeven	*27th Middlesex*	*2/2/2025*
Samantha Montaño	*15th Suffolk*	*2/6/2025*
Rodney M. Elliott	*16th Middlesex*	*2/6/2025*
Carmine Lawrence Gentile	*13th Middlesex*	*2/6/2025*
James C. Arena-DeRosa	*8th Middlesex*	*2/12/2025*
Natalie M. Higgins	*4th Worcester*	*2/24/2025*
Jonathan D. Zlotnik	*2nd Worcester*	*3/14/2025*
John Francis Moran	*9th Suffolk*	*4/10/2025*
Rebecca L. Rausch	*Norfolk, Worcester and Middlesex*	*4/10/2025*
Mike Connolly	*26th Middlesex*	*4/10/2025*
Margaret R. Scarsdale	*1st Middlesex*	*4/24/2025*

Kristin E. Kassner	*2nd Essex*	*10/30/2025*
Leigh Davis	*3rd Berkshire*	*11/3/2025*

HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 3621 FILED ON: 1/17/2025

HOUSE . . . . . No. 112

By Representative Blais of Deerfield, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 112) of Natalie M. Blais and others relative to agricultural resilience. Agriculture.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)

An Act fostering agricultural resilience in Massachusetts.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 6A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after section 18AA the following section:-

Section 18BB. The Massachusetts emergency management agency shall develop and maintain a plan for supporting agricultural, seafood and processed food production in the commonwealth in all emergency preparedness planning efforts in order to mitigate the impacts of food supply chain disruptions. The plan shall be developed in coordination with the department of agricultural resources, the department of public health and the department of transitional assistance, and shall include consideration for food production, transportation, storage and distribution. The plan shall be reviewed and updated every 5 years. The director of the Massachusetts emergency management agency shall submit the plan, and subsequent required plan revisions, to the house and senate clerks' offices, the joint committee on agriculture and the joint committee on emergency preparedness and management.

SECTION 2. Section 6C of chapter 20 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is amended by inserting after subsection (g) the following subsection:-

(h) The council shall appoint a full time food system coordinator as an employee. The food system coordinator shall have access to all relevant agency meetings; serve in an advisory capacity to all relevant departments to inventory existing state programs which relate to the food system across all state agencies, including, but not limited to, agencies associated with the council; facilitate communication and resource collaboration across state agencies; develop and track metrics related to food system goals; identify opportunities to eliminate duplicative efforts and strengthen complementary programs and projects; identify gaps in services and supports and make recommendations; and provide input to help coordinate outreach to underserved communities. The food system coordinator shall submit a report 1 week prior to each council meeting with findings, progress updates and recommendations to the clerks of the senate and the house of representatives, the council, relevant department secretaries and relevant department commissioners.

SECTION 3. Said chapter 20, as so appearing, is hereby amended by inserting after said section 6C the following section:-

Section 6D. (a) As used in this section, the following words shall have the following meanings:

“Local food”, food for human consumption that was grown, raised, caught or processed in Massachusetts.

(b) It is hereby declared the policy of the commonwealth, the department of agricultural resources and the department of transitional assistance to maximize the amount of local food that

is distributed to Massachusetts residents through state food assistance programs, while maintaining affordability for food banks and individuals and fairly valuing local food, in order to advance health equity for all residents of the commonwealth and promote a strong local food system. This section shall be implemented to achieve this goal.

(c) Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the department of agricultural resources, in collaboration with the commonwealth's 4 regional food banks, the executive office of elder affairs, the department of transitional assistance, the department of higher education and the department of elementary and secondary education, shall, annually on or before October 31, report on the distribution of local food through state food assistance programs. The report shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

(i) the quantity of local food distributed, by dollar value and as a percentage of total food distributed and, where possible, by weight;

(ii) a breakdown of the types of local food distributed, including, but not limited to, produce, meat, dairy, seafood and processed food, including whether or not the processed food includes ingredients grown, raised or caught in Massachusetts, by dollar amounts and as a percentage of total food distributed and, where possible, by weight;

(iii) the quantity of local food distributed by state food assistance plans including, but not limited to, the Massachusetts emergency food assistance program, the Massachusetts healthy incentives program, universal free school meals, the hunger-free campus initiative, the farm to school FRESH grant program, the senior nutrition program, the Meals on Wheels Program and the senior farm share program, by dollar amounts and as a percentage of total food distributed; and

(iv) agency and departmental recommendations on how Massachusetts can increase the amount of local food distributed through state food assistance programs in future fiscal years while maintaining affordability for food banks and individuals and fairly valuing local food, as well as budgetary or policy recommendations for implementing those recommendations.

The report shall be made available on the department of agricultural resources' website and a copy shall be filed with the clerks of the house and senate, the joint committee on agriculture and the joint committee on children, families and persons with disabilities.

SECTION 4. The second sentence of subsection (a) of section 23 of said chapter 20, as so appearing, is hereby amended by inserting after the words "agricultural purposes," in line 14, the following words:- ; provided, that the committee or any independent appraisal to determine the fair market value of the land restricted for agricultural purposes shall include in its valuation the appraised value of any easements and infrastructure including dwellings, structures, plumbing and irrigation systems on the entire parcel in its fair market value consideration or any payment.

SECTION 5. Section 24 of said chapter 20, as so appearing, is hereby amended by inserting after subsection (d) the following subsection:-

(e)(1) As used in this subsection, the following words shall have the following meanings:

"Agricultural preservation restriction", agricultural preservation restriction as defined in section 31 of chapter 184.

"Farm viability", the financial and environmental ability of a farm to remain in operation and produce crops over the short- and long-term.

(2) The committee shall create annual and long-term goals for enrolling land as an agricultural preservation restriction. Said goals shall consider the value of a parcel to the commonwealth by considering the following factors: acreage, farm viability, soil health, carbon sequestration and other ecosystem services, infrastructure, access to markets, access to land ownership for historically marginalized communities, environmental justice principles as defined by section 62 of chapter 30, vulnerability to being transformed into a non-agricultural use and any other factors as determined by the committee.

(3) The committee shall post a public notice of availability of the draft goals in the environmental monitor and provide a 60-day public comment period. The committee shall duly consider and respond to comments received and finalize the goals. The goals shall be updated every 5 years, or more frequently, with public review. The committee shall post the final goals, and any subsequent updates to the goals, on the department of agricultural resources' website.

(4) The committee shall publish an annual report evaluating their progress to meet the goals established pursuant to paragraph (2) of this subsection. Said report shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

(i) The number of acres enrolled in an agricultural preservation restriction during the past year and the total number of acres enrolled in an agricultural preservation restriction in the commonwealth;

(ii) The total number of farms enrolled in an agricultural preservation restriction during the past year and the total number of farms enrolled in an agricultural preservation restriction in the commonwealth;

(iii) The geographic distribution of farms enrolled in an agricultural preservation restriction;

(iv) Challenges to enrolling new land in an agricultural preservation restriction;

(v) Plans for the following year to meet the goals established pursuant to paragraph (2) of this subsection; and

(vi) Budgetary requests and statutory changes, if needed, in order to achieve the goals established pursuant to paragraph (2) of this subsection.

The committee shall annually, not later than March 1, submit a copy of the report to the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate, the house and senate committees on ways and means, the joint committee on agriculture and the joint committee on environment and natural resources. The annual reports shall be posted on the department of agricultural resources' website.

SECTION 6. Said chapter 20 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by adding the following section:-

Section 33. There shall be established a food security infrastructure grant program to support equitable access to healthy, local food and to strengthen food supply and distribution systems in all geographic regions of the commonwealth, which shall be administered by the commissioner. The program shall consist of financial assistance to food producers, processors and distributors; emergency food distributors; community and food organizations; school meal programs and summer meal sponsors; urban farms and community gardens; and nonprofit food security organizations to fund capital improvements including: (i) the purchase of new or used

equipment; (ii) contracted labor costs in order to implement projects; and (iii) costs associated with planning and design directly related to capital projects that will allow applicants to strengthen and improve the resiliency of the commonwealth's food system while allowing greater access to fresh, local food in a way that addresses systemic inequities.

SECTION 7. Chapter 29 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after section 2DDDDDD the following section:-

Section 2EEEEEE. (a) There shall be established and set up on the books of the commonwealth a separate fund to be known as the Next Generation Farmers Fund. The fund shall be administered by the secretary of labor and workforce development, in consultation with the secretary of environmental affairs and the secretary of education.

(b) The fund shall be credited with $3,000,000 annually from the Workforce and Competitiveness Trust Fund, established by section 2WWW of chapter 28, for an agricultural workforce development grant program. Said program shall award grants to the commonwealth's higher education institutions, vocational technical schools or community-based organizations that have existing programs for providing workforce development training to first time farmers or the capacity to create such programs. Priority consideration shall be given to programs that serve a high percentage of historically underserved or low-income students or people with disabilities, as well as programs that include hands-on training and training in agricultural practices that mitigate climate change and protect the environment. Not less than $3,000,000 annually from this fund shall go to programs that provide training in agriculture as defined by section 1A of chapter 128; provided that not more than $1,000,000 shall be granted annually to programs providing training in the growing and harvesting of forest products upon forest land.

(c) A report detailing the expenditures of the fund shall be submitted annually on or before May 30 to the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate, the house and senate committees on ways and means, the joint committee on economic development and emerging technologies and the joint committee on agriculture.

SECTION 8. Section 20 of chapter 30B of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking, in line 19, the figure “10” and inserting in place thereof the following figure:- 20.

SECTION 9. Section 3 of chapter 40A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after the word “floriculture”, in lines 6, 10, 24, 29, 31 to 32, 40 and 47, in each instance, the following word:- , agritourism.

SECTION 10. Said section 3 of said chapter 40A, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by inserting, after the words “chapter 128”, in line 37, the following words:- , the word “agritourism” shall be as defined in section 1B of said chapter 128.

SECTION 11. Said section 3 of said chapter 40A, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by inserting after the first paragraph the following paragraph:-

Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent any of the zoning ordinance or by-law exemptions under this section applying to land on which agritourism activities take place; provided, that the uses of this land and the structures thereon conform with the requirements of the first paragraph of this section. In considering whether land is used for the primary purpose of commercial agriculture, aquaculture, silviculture, horticulture, floriculture or viticulture, the presence or lack of agritourism activities located thereon shall not be the sole basis for granting or refusing to grant this consideration.

SECTION 12. Section 2A of chapter 61A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after subsection (d) the following subsection:-

(e) (1) As used in this subsection, the following words shall have the following meanings:

"Commissioner", the commissioner of the department of agricultural resources.

"Department", the department of agricultural resources.

"Farmland", land primarily and directly used for agricultural purposes pursuant to section 1 of this chapter or land primarily and directly used for horticultural purposes pursuant to section 2 of this chapter.

"Farm viability", the financial and environmental ability of a farm to remain in operation and produce crops over the short- and long-term.

(2) Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the department, in consultation with the department of energy resources, once every 10 years or at other such frequency as determined by the commissioner, whichever is more frequent, shall review and consider whether any amendments to statutory, regulatory and deed-based restrictions on the amount of renewable energy allowed to be generated on farmland, including but not limited to, land under chapter 61A and land in the agricultural preservation restriction program established pursuant to section 23 of chapter 20, would help preserve or improve farm viability. The department shall consider whether alternative measures such as updated or modernized farm management or business practices could achieve the same or similar improvements in farm viability, as well as the commonwealth's current ability to support farmers in updating said practices, in their consideration of whether and which amendments to recommend. The

department shall additionally factor into their review and considerations the promotion of healthy soils and biodiversity, environmental sustainability and the commonwealth's renewable energy goals pursuant to the roadmap plans required under section 5 of said chapter 21N. If the department concludes that amendments to the restrictions on the amount of renewable energy allowed to be generated on farmland are warranted, the commissioner shall include a list of the department's specific recommended amendments in the department's report.

(3) The department shall report the findings of their review to the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate, the house and senate committees on ways and means, the joint committee on agriculture and the joint committee on environment and natural resources.

SECTION 13. Said chapter 61A of the General Laws is hereby amended by striking out section 14, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, and inserting in place thereof the following section:-

Section 14. Land taxed under this chapter shall not be sold for, or converted to, residential, industrial or commercial use while so taxed or within 1 year after that time unless the city or town in which the land is located and the department of agricultural resources has been notified of the intent to sell for, or to convert to, that other use.

The discontinuance of agricultural or horticultural use shall not, in itself, for the purposes of this section, be considered a conversion. Specific use of land for a residence for the owner, the owner's spouse or a parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, or brother or sister of the owner, or surviving husband or wife of any deceased such relative, or for living quarters for any persons actively employed full-time in the agricultural or horticultural use of such land, shall not be a

conversion for the purposes of this section, and a certificate of the board of assessors, recorded with the registry of deeds, shall conclusively establish that particular use.

Any notice of intent to sell for other use shall be accompanied by a statement of intent to sell, a statement of proposed use of the land, the location and acreage of land as shown on a map drawn at the scale of the assessors map in the city or town in which the land is situated, and the name, address and telephone number of the landowner.

Any notice of intent to sell for other use shall be accompanied by a certified copy of an executed purchase and sale agreement specifying the purchase price and all terms and conditions of the proposed sale, which is limited to only the property classified under this chapter, and which shall be a bona fide offer as described below.

Any notice of intent to sell for other use shall also be accompanied by any additional agreements or a statement of any additional consideration for any contiguous land under the same ownership, and not classified under this chapter, but sold or to be sold contemporaneously with the proposed sale.

For the purposes of this chapter, a bona fide offer to purchase shall mean a good faith offer, not dependent upon potential changes to current zoning or conditions or contingencies relating to the potential for, or the potential extent of, subdivision of the property for residential use or the potential for, or the potential extent of development of the property for industrial or commercial use, made by a party unaffiliated with the landowner for a fixed consideration payable upon delivery of the deed.

Any notice of intent to convert to other use shall be accompanied by a statement of intent to convert, a statement of proposed use of the land, the location and acreage of land as shown on

a map drawn at the scale of the assessors map in the city or town in which the land is situated, the name, address and telephone number of the landowner and the landowner's attorney, if any.

The notice of intent to sell or convert shall be sent by the landowner by certified mail or hand delivered to the mayor and city council of a city, or select board of a town, and in the case of either a city or a town, to its board of assessors, to its planning board and conservation commission, if any, to the commissioner of the department of agricultural resources and to the state forester.

A notarized affidavit that the landowner has mailed or delivered a notice of intent to sell or convert shall be conclusive evidence that the landowner has mailed the notice in the manner and at the time specified. Each affidavit shall have attached to it a copy of the notice of intent to which it relates.

The notice of intent to sell or convert shall be considered to have been duly mailed if addressed to the mayor and city council or select board in care of the city or town clerk; to the planning board and conservation commission if addressed to them directly; to the department of agricultural resources if addressed to the secretary of the executive office of energy and environmental affairs or to the commissioner of the department of agricultural resources; to the state forester if addressed to the commissioner of the department of conservation and recreation; and to the assessors if addressed to them directly.

If the notice of intent to sell or convert does not contain all of the material described above, then the town or city, within 30 days after receipt, shall notify the landowner in writing that notice is insufficient and does not comply.

For a period of 120 days after the day following the latest date of deposit in the United States mail of any notice which complies with this section, the city or town shall have, in the case of intended sale, a first refusal option to meet a bona fide offer to purchase the land. If the city or town does not exercise its option, the department of agricultural resources shall then have a refusal option to meet a bona fide offer to purchase the land or assign such right.

In the case of intended or determined conversion not involving sale, the municipality, or the department of agricultural resources if the municipality does not exercise its option, shall have an option to purchase the land at full and fair market value to be determined by an impartial appraisal performed by a certified appraiser hired at the expense of the municipality or its assignee, or the department of agricultural resources or its assignee, the original appraisal to be completed and delivered to the landowner within 30 days after the notice of conversion to the municipality and the department of agricultural resources. In the event that the landowner is dissatisfied with the original appraisal, the landowner may, at the landowner's expense, contract for a second appraisal, to be completed within 60 days after the delivery of the notice to convert. If, after completion of the second appraisal, the parties cannot agree on a consideration, the parties will contract with a mutually acceptable appraiser for a third appraisal whose cost will be borne equally by both parties. The third appraisal shall be delivered to both parties within 90 days after the notice of conversion to the municipality and shall be the final determination of consideration. Upon agreement of a consideration, the city or town shall then have 120 days to exercise its option. During the appraisal process, the landowner may revoke the intent to convert at any time and with no recourse to either party. The department of agricultural resources shall only have the ability to exercise its option after the municipality provides written notice of its intent to not exercise its option as set forth in this section. The department of agricultural

resources shall have the remaining time or an additional 60 days, whichever is longer, to exercise its option in the same manner and subject as the city or town.

The option may be exercised only after a public hearing followed by written notice signed by the mayor or select board if the option is exercised by the municipality, or signed by the commissioner of the department of agricultural resources if the option is exercised by the department of agricultural resources, mailed to the landowner by certified mail at the address that is specified in the notice of intent. Notice of public hearing shall be given in accordance with section 23B of chapter 39.

The notice of exercise shall also be recorded at the registry of deeds and shall contain the name of the record owner of the land and description of the premises adequate for identification of them.

The notice to the landowner of the city or town's or the department of agricultural resources' election to exercise its option shall be accompanied by a proposed purchase and sale contract or other agreement between the city or town or the department of agricultural resources and the landowner which, if executed, shall be fulfilled within a period of not more than 90 days after the date the contract or agreement, endorsed by the landowner, is returned by certified mail to the mayor or select board or the commissioner of the department of agricultural resources, or upon expiration of any extended period that the landowner has agreed to in writing, whichever is later.

At the public hearing or a further public hearing, the city or town or the department of agricultural resources may assign its option to a nonprofit conservation organization, or to the commonwealth or any of its political subdivisions, or in the case of the department of

agricultural resources, to any individual or entity it determines is fit to ensure the continued agricultural use of such land, under the terms and conditions that the mayor or select board or the commissioner of the department of agricultural resources may consider appropriate. Notice of public hearing shall be given in accordance with section 23B of chapter 39.

The assignment shall be for the purpose of maintaining not less than 70 per cent of the land in use as forest land as defined in section 1 of chapter 61, as land in agricultural or horticultural use as defined in sections 1 and 2 or as recreational land as defined in section 1 of chapter 61B, and in no case shall the assignee develop a greater proportion of the land than was proposed by the developer whose offer gave rise to the assignment. All land other than land that is to be developed shall then be bound by a permanent deed restriction that meets the requirements of chapter 184.

If the first refusal option has been assigned as provided in this section, the mayor or select board or the commissioner of the department of agricultural resources shall provide written notice of assignment to the landowner.

The notice of assignment shall state the name and address of the individual, entity, organization or agency of the commonwealth which will exercise the option in addition to the terms and conditions of the assignment. The notice of assignment shall be recorded with the registry of deeds.

Failure to record either the notice of exercise or the notice of assignment within the 120 day period or the additional 60 day period if exercised by the department of agricultural resources shall be conclusive evidence that the city or town or the department of agricultural resources has not exercised its option.

If the option has been assigned to an individual, entity, nonprofit conservation organization or to the commonwealth or any of its political subdivisions, the option may be exercised by the assignee only by written notice to the landowner signed by the assignee, mailed to the landowner by certified mail at the address that is specified in the notice of intent. The notice of exercise shall also be recorded with the registry of deeds and shall contain the name of the record owner of the land and description of the premises adequate for identification of them.

The notice of exercise to the landowner shall be accompanied by a proposed purchase and sale contract or other agreement between the assignee and landowner which, if executed, shall be fulfilled within a period of not more than 90 days, or upon expiration of any extended period the landowner has agreed to in writing, from the date the contract or agreement, endorsed by the landowner, is returned by certified mail to the assignee.

During the 120 day period or the additional 60 day period, the city or town or the department of agricultural resources or its assignees, shall have the right, at reasonable times and upon reasonable notice, to enter upon the land for the purpose of surveying and inspecting the land, including, but not limited to, soil testing for purposes of Title V and the taking of water samples.

The city or town or the department of agricultural resources or its assignee shall have all rights assigned to the buyer in the purchase and sale agreement contained in the notice of intent.

If the city or town or the department of agricultural resources elects not to exercise the option, and not to assign its right to exercise the option, the city or town or the department of agricultural resources shall send written notice of nonexercise, signed by the mayor or select board or the commissioner of the department of agricultural resources, to the landowner by

certified mail at the address that is specified in the notice of intent. The notice of nonexercise shall contain the name of the owner of record of the land and description of the premises adequate for identification of them and shall be recorded with the registry of deeds.

No sale or conversion of the land shall be consummated until the option period has expired or the notice of nonexercise has been recorded with the registry of deeds, and no sale of the land shall be consummated if the terms of the sale differ in any material way from the terms of the purchase and sale agreement which accompanied the bona fide offer to purchase as described in the notice of intent to sell except as provided in this section.

This section shall not apply to a mortgage foreclosure sale, but the holder of a mortgage shall, at least 90 days before a foreclosure sale, send written notice of the time and place of the sale to the parties in the manner described in this section for notice of intent to sell or convert, and the giving of notice may be established by an affidavit as described in this section.

SECTION 14. Said chapter 61A of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by inserting after section 24 the following section:-

Section 25. (a) As used in this section, the following words shall have the following meanings:

"Agricultural land", agricultural land as defined in section 1 of this chapter.

"Horticultural land", horticultural land as defined in section 2 of this chapter.

(b) The department of revenue, in consultation with the department of agricultural resources, shall establish and maintain a central registry of all agricultural and horticultural land in the commonwealth. The department of revenue shall update the registry on an annual basis or

at other such frequency as determined by the commissioner of revenue, whichever is more frequent. The commissioner of revenue shall facilitate information sharing among federal, state and local entities. Said registry shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

(i) in total and in each municipality, the number of parcels and the number of acres of agricultural land and horticultural land;

(ii) in total and in each municipality, the number of parcels and the number of acres of agricultural land and horticultural land enrolled in this chapter;

(iii) in total and in each municipality, the number of parcels of agricultural land and horticultural land that are disenrolled from this chapter during that year;

(iv) in total and in each municipality, the number of parcels of agricultural land and horticultural land that have been newly enrolled this chapter during that year;

(v) in total and in each municipality, the number of parcels and the number of acres of land receiving the rate of tax applicable to agricultural or horticultural land pursuant to section 4 of this chapter; and

(iv) the percentage of all cropland, as reported in the most recent United States Department of Agriculture Census of Agriculture, that is enrolled in this chapter.

The department of revenue, in consultation with the department of agricultural resources, shall integrate the data from the central registry into a publicly accessible, interactive map with data shown at both the individual parcel and municipal level. The map shall be created in a format that allows for comparison and overlays with existing maps of soil conditions and types.

The department of revenue shall make its data collection methodologies, findings and all of the data within the central registry and map accessible to the department of agricultural resources. The department shall make the central registry and the map publicly available, downloadable and searchable on its website.

SECTION 15. Chapter 75 of the General Laws is hereby amended by striking out section 14D, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, and inserting in place thereof the following section:-

Section 14D. There shall be within the University of Massachusetts a University of Massachusetts Extension Board of Public Overseers for the purpose of advising and assisting the chancellor of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst in the mission, budget, operation and management of University of Massachusetts Extension programs. Nothing in this section shall directly affect the employment status of personnel.

The board shall consist of 1 member of the senate, who shall be appointed by the senate president; 1 member who shall be appointed by the minority leader of the senate; 1 member of the house of representatives, who shall be appointed by the speaker of the house; 1 member who shall be appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives; a designee of the president of the university; a designee of the chancellor of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst; the commissioner of food and agriculture; and the following persons to be appointed by the governor: 3 members of the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation, Inc. chosen from a list of 12 members submitted by said federation; 1 member of the Massachusetts 4–H Foundation, Inc. chosen from a list of 3 members submitted by said organization; 1 member of the Massachusetts Forestry Association chosen from a list of 3 members submitted by said

association; 1 member of the Massachusetts Audubon Society chosen from a list of 3 members submitted by said society; 1 member of the Massachusetts Arborists Association chosen from a list of 3 members submitted by said association; 1 member of a Buy Local organization chosen from a list of 3 members submitted by said organization; 1 member of the Massachusetts Food System Collaborative chosen from a list of 3 members submitted by said collaborative; 1 member from an organization engaged in urban farming education or practices; and 2 members of organizations that support historically marginalized or new entry farmers and food producers. The chancellor of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst shall appoint the chairperson from among the membership of the board. Members of the board shall serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed, subject to appropriation, out of any funds available for the purpose, for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties.

The appointed members of the board shall serve for terms of 5 years, except for persons appointed to fill vacancies, who shall serve for the unexpired term. The board shall hold an annual meeting in January and at least 3 other times during the year. The University of Massachusetts Extension director shall attend all meetings of the board and shall serve as secretary but shall have no vote in its deliberation. 10 members of the board shall constitute a quorum. The board may, by vote of its members then in office, adopt a policy for the conduct of business, including constitution of board membership. Policies may be amended or repealed by a two-thirds vote of its members.

The director shall prepare an annual budget for board consideration. Such budget shall be adopted by the board and approved by the chancellor of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. The director shall annually render a complete and detailed report of the activities, outcomes, revenue and expenditures to the board.

The university on behalf of the board may receive, manage and disburse grants and donations from governmental agencies, other colleges and universities, corporations, foundations, associations and individuals for the purpose of funding the University of Massachusetts Extension and agricultural research programs. Further, the university on behalf of the board may establish and administer trust funds to support such programs.

SECTION 16. Chapter 128 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after section 1A the following section:-

Section 1B. (a) For the purposes of this section, the following terms shall, unless the context clearly requires otherwise, have the following meanings:

"Agritourism", an agriculturally related educational, entertainment, historical, cultural, commercial or recreational activity that allows or invites members of the general public to observe, participate in, experience and enjoy that activity, and that primarily serves to encourage the purchase of agricultural products grown on the land where the activity takes place.

“Land”, an entire parcel of land or multiple contiguous whole parcels of land owned by the same person.

(b) Agritourism may be conducted on land primarily used for commercial agriculture, aquaculture, silviculture, horticulture, floriculture or viticulture. Agritourism may be conducted on land not primarily used for commercial agriculture, aquaculture, silviculture, horticulture, floriculture or viticulture if: (i) at least 75 per cent of the acreage of said land is dedicated to agriculture; (ii) at least 50 per cent of the agricultural product produced on said land, by either gross annual sales or annual volume, is utilized in agritourism activities; (iii) at least 25 per cent of the gross annual income from all activities on the land on which the agritourism activity is

located results from the sale of products that have been produced on said land; and (iv) at least an additional 50 per cent of the gross annual income from all activities on said land results from the sale of products that have been produced on said land or on land in Massachusetts used for the primary purpose of commercial agriculture, aquaculture, silviculture, horticulture, floriculture or viticulture.

SECTION 17. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the executive office of health and human services, in consultation with the division of insurance and the department of agricultural resources, shall conduct a comprehensive study to ascertain the state safety net and other benefit programs available to farmers, identify the challenges and obstacles for farmers in applying for, qualifying for and maintaining coverage under existing safety net programs and make recommendations for how the state can amend current programs or create new programs to better support farmers. The secretary shall facilitate information sharing and policy synchronization among federal, state and local entities. Recommendations shall include, but not be limited to, strategies and solutions for: (i) increasing access to coverage under MassHealth for farmers; (ii) increasing access to premium assistance payments or point-of-service cost-sharing subsidies for farmers through the commonwealth health insurance connector authority; (iii) mitigating the MassHealth cliff effect for farmers; (iv) providing pension or state retirement coverage to farmers, including, but not limited to, through a state matching program for farmers' retirement contributions; and (v) meeting the differing needs of farmer populations, including, but not limited to, urban farmers, rural farmers and farmers from historically underserved communities in recommendations provided for clauses i to iii of this section, inclusive.

The executive office of health and human services shall submit a report of its findings and recommendations, including any budgetary or statutory needs, to the clerks of the house and senate, the house and senate committees on ways and means, the joint committee on health care financing and the joint committee on agriculture not later than 12 months after the effective date of this act.

SECTION 18. The initial plan required under subsection (a) of section 1 shall be completed no later than 1 year after the effective date of this act.

SECTION 19. The department shall promulgate regulations to implement the provisions of section 6 no later than 120 days after the effective date of this act.

SECTION 20. The first report required by section 12 of this act shall be completed and submitted no later than 6 months after the effective date of this act.

SECTION 21. The registry and map referenced in section 14 of this act shall be established and hosted on the department of revenue’s website no later than 9 months after the effective date of this act.