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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Senator Anne Gobi Advocates for Environmental Programs in Senate Budget**

**BOSTON – Senator Anne M. Gobi (D-Spencer)** has announced a multitude of environmental initiatives she was successful in advocating for in the FY17 Senate budget. Gobi filed amendments supporting Buy Local initiatives, the statewide 4-H program, the Farm to School project and Apiary inspections that were all adopted by the Senate.

“Massachusetts has always been a leader in sustainability and must continue to do so,” said Senator Gobi. “I was proud to advocate for these important environmental initiatives, but there is much more that needs to be done to preserve the incredible natural resources and that Massachusetts offers.”

Senator Gobi was successful in securing \$300,000 for Buy Local initiatives in western, central, northeastern and southern Massachusetts. With over 7,755 farms and with generated sales over \$492 million, Massachusetts farms play an important role in the Massachusetts economy. Buy Local campaigns play an important role in connecting farms to consumers and boosting this industry, while increasing access to locally grown, healthy foods.

The Farm to School project also received support from the Senate. \$120,000 was approved to facilitate sustainable purchasing relationships between local institutions and local farms, promote local food and agriculture education for students and support state, regional and national networking of farm to school practitioners.

Senator Gobi was also able to advocate for funding for Massachusetts 4-H, a youth development program for young people ages 5 through 18. 4-H members meet with mentors and complete environmental projects, learning vital leadership and team skills.

The differing versions of the Senate and House budget will now be negotiated by the six member conference committee, after which it will be sent to Governor Baker's desk.

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