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Reps. Andrews & Gobi Join Effort to Expand Small Farms Tax Credit

(BOSTON) – On Wednesday, State Representatives Denise Andrews (D-Orange) and Anne Gobi (D-Spencer) joined an effort by legislators to urge the three House members of the conference committee working out differences between House and Senate versions of a forthcoming economic development bill to include a provision expanding a 3% tax credit to small unincorporated farms and fisheries. The change would allow many family farms access to a tax credit long available to large agricultural corporations for the purpose of stimulating growth in the farming and aquaculture sectors.

“We all benefit from a robust agricultural economy and our farmers provide us with locally grown produce and products,” said Representative Anne Gobi (D-Spencer), House Chair of the Joint Committee on Environment, Agriculture and Natural Resources. “This tax credit is a way to help them and recognize their contribution.”

Since 1973, incorporated farms and fisheries have been allowed to apply a state tax credit toward capital investments for agricultural and fishing operations. Home to almost eight thousand farms, more than seventy percent of farms in Massachusetts are smaller than 49 acres in size. The bill language rewards small business owners for investing in their own companies with trade specific durable equipment expected to last more than four years.

“Being from a rural area of the Commonwealth, where many people in my generation grew up working on small farms, we understand the critical role of farming to the character and quality of life in the Second Franklin District,” commented Representative Denise Andrews (D-Orange). “We all know the value small farms and local food add to our quality of life and economy. I hope that this initiative will be included in ‘*An Act promoting economic growth across the Commonwealth*,’ helping to stimulate additional vitality and growth, supporting the long-term viability of small farms. The effort provides equity for small-scale producers in this economic

development program, which has benefited larger agricultural operations for many years. Please join me in supporting local farms this growing season by seeking out farm stands and area farmers' markets.

In the letter to House conferees, Rep. Andrews joined forty-four of her House colleagues. More information on the licensing process can be found by visiting www.deniseandrews.org. A list of area farms can found on www.buylocalfood.org.

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