

Reps. Kathleen Law, Valentine, Hopgood, Stahl, Gonzales, Polidori, Byrnes, Mayes, Sak, Accavitti, Bauer, Bieda, Brown, Caul, Clack, Condino, Cushingberry, Dean, Hammel, Hammon, Johnson, Robert Jones, LeBlanc, Leland, Lemmons, McDowell, Meisner, Melton, Sheltroun, Spade, Tobocman Vagnozzi and Stahl offered the following resolution:

**House Resolution No. 156.**

A resolution to encourage Congress and the United States Department of Agriculture to implement food policies that promote healthy food, farms, and communities by encouraging local production of fruits and vegetables by specialty crop farmers.

Whereas, The federal Farm Bill traditionally provides crop subsidies to corn, wheat, soybean, and cotton farmers, and less than 40 percent of all United States farmers and ranchers actually receive any kind of subsidy from the federal government. However, there are many different kinds of farmers, both in Michigan and nationwide, growing nutritious and affordable fruits and vegetables that are vital to the health and well-being of Americans. Government support must emphasize nutritious, affordable, and locally available foods; and

Whereas, The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (the 2002 Farm Bill) encourages institutions participating in the school lunch program to purchase locally produced foods for school meals. While the real price of fruits and vegetables has increased by 40 percent since 1985, the cost of junk food and sodas has declined by as much as 20 percent. We need to encourage the choice of fresh fruits and vegetables by purchasing locally grown produce and other foods, thereby supporting local farmers and benefiting students in need of high quality, nutritious food products. However, the USDA continues to discourage efforts by schools and other institutions to develop these important programs. The USDA claims that 7 CFR 3016.60(c) clearly prohibits the use of state or local geographic preferences and that all purchases are to be made competitively; and

Whereas, The Community Food Projects, a federally funded program designed to fight food insecurity through development of local food projects, promotes self-sufficiency of low-income communities. Grants from this program support urban nonprofits and urban residents in growing fresh vegetables in their neighborhoods. Funding is also used to provide entrepreneurship training to urban farmers, again encouraging local specialty crop farmers in Michigan. However, maintaining current funding for the Community Food Projects is important to promoting healthy, locally grown foods in low-income communities; and

Whereas, The emphasis on traditional crops in the allocation of farm subsidies has resulted in a loss of fruit and vegetable farmers as well as a decrease in the acreage of specialty crop farmland used for farming nationwide. At the current rate, Michigan will lose 15 percent of its agricultural land by 2040, including 25 percent of the acreage used to grow fruit and 36 percent of the acreage used to grow dry beans. The Michigan House of Representatives supports the federal government encouraging and providing programs and assistance to farm operations that grow fruits and vegetables including but not limited to asparagus, cherries, apples, carrots, beets, lettuce, celery, squash, potatoes, peppers, pumpkins etc; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we encourage Congress and the United States Department of Agriculture to implement food policies that promote healthy food, farms, and communities by encouraging local production of fruits and vegetables by specialty crop farmers; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.