



Carl Cushing  
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WLEF Grantee '22

Vermont House and Senate Appropriations Committee  
(Sent by email to: [testimony2023@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:testimony2023@leg.state.vt.us))

Subject: **Please support the Governor's appropriation of \$4 million for the Working Lands Enterprise Initiative and make the full \$4 million base funding.**

The Working Lands Enterprise Initiative is helping us increase our capacity for in-state meat processing. Our small USDA-certified facility connects hundreds of farmers in Vermont to customers throughout the Northeast that those farms supply. With demand for high-quality, sustainable, humanely-raised meat rising year over year, regional processing continues to bottleneck the agricultural economy. Through a \$100,000 grant, the Working Lands Enterprise Fund is helping to cover a portion of the cost of updating our aging equipment and facility. Which is part of a larger investment that we are making that will allow us to expand our facility's throughput from 36 animals to 108 on average per week, once all of the facility renovations are complete. This expansion of throughput capacity helps us provide a critical service to our regional network of farms and ranches, and it will also allow our business to increase our staffing and provide jobs for folks in our community in and around Ferrisburgh.

Access to public funding to support Vermont's economy is a valuable resource that we have been fortunate enough to receive funding from. **Please show your continued support for the Governor's appropriation of \$4 million for the Working Lands Enterprise Initiative and make the full \$4 million base funding.** The Working Lands Enterprise Initiative is an important resource to the small businesses and entrepreneurs that keep Vermont's working lands economically viable.

Thank you,

Carl Cushing  
Owner, Vermont Livestock Slaughter & Processing