

Nelson Boys Dairy LLC

371 Montagne Rd
Swanton, Vermont 05488

Date: April 11, 2018
To: House Natural Resources Committee:
RE: S.260

We, as you may know, operate under the regulation of the new Required Agricultural Practices (RAP). We do this not because we are required to but because we care about water quality and what it will mean to future generations. Farmers are first and foremost, caretakers of the land. We consider the RAP's as the handbook for the "boots on the ground".

The misinformation that has been stated in the Legislative arena and media is not factual and no one is taking the time to know what is the true. We as the farmers on the ground quite frankly tell you what the reality is on our farms and with the State Agencies. The media misconstrues and twists the real data and situation to further the agenda of activists which are only pushing a political agenda. S.260 is not needed rather the Legislature should allow time for the RAP's and other water quality projects work. You have recently seen that even the EPA acknowledges that Vermont is making progress.

We do appreciate the Committee's position to remove the section on "Citizen Suits". VAAF and ANR have aggressively enforced against instances of non-compliance. Recent stories regarding an alleged lack of agency oversight have been deceptive and, in some cases, slanderous. In addition, the perception that farms are not being monitored and inspected is false. Our industry is one of the most highly regulated and enforced industries in our state. The adoption of the RAPs (Required Agriculture Practices) takes time and money to implement. Money, that the current market simply cannot support. But, regardless farms are trying to do all they can to implement meet the regulations. However, a small but loud group of advocates continue to try to divert our efforts by introducing legislation like S260. We are frustrated that as we struggle to work to maintain our farm and business while others are painting an inaccurate and negative picture of dairy farming in Vermont.

Let's all spend our time on legislation that promotes, encourages and is fact based towards solutions rather than deplete the few resources we have on attorney and agency staff hours. We encourage you to come to visit a dairy farm and ask questions.

We respectfully, ask that you support the dairy sector so that we are all working towards the same common goal- clean water. S.260 is unnecessary.

Sincerely,

Dylan Nelson
Nelson Boys Dairy LLC