

## Rebecca Buck

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**From:** Margaret Mccoy <margaret@vtrural.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 02, 2018 1:18 PM  
**To:** Jane Kitchel; Alice Nitka; Richard Sears; Robert Starr; Richard McCormack; Tim Ashe; rawestman@gmail.com  
**Cc:** Rebecca Buck; 'Paul Costello'  
**Subject:** Testimony for Senate Appropriations  
**Attachments:** WLLetter to SenateApprops418.pdf

Dear Chair Kitchel and Members of the Senate Committee on Appropriations:

Please see the attached letter from the Working Lands Coalition encouraging your continued support of WLEB investment of \$700,000 for FY'19 which includes the Governor's recommend of \$594,000 plus \$106,000 in additional investment from the general fund as proposed in H.924. The Coalition appreciates your hard work on the budget and your leadership in support of the rural and working lands economy.

Margaret

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Margaret McCoy, *Office and Communications Manager*  
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April 2, 2018

## Working Lands Coalition Partners

The Center for an  
Agricultural Economy

NOFA Vermont

Preservation Trust of  
Vermont

Shelburne Farms

Vermont Association  
of Planning and  
Development Agencies

Vermont Community  
Loan Fund

Vermont Council on  
Rural Development

Vermont Farm Bureau

Vermont Land Trust

Vermont Natural  
Resources Council

The Vermont  
Sustainable Jobs Fund  
and Farm to Plate

Vermont Wood  
Manufacturers  
Association

Vermont Woodlands  
Association

The Woodstock  
Foundation

Dear Members of the Senate Appropriations Committee,

As you all continue your hard work on the 2019 budget, we wanted to take a moment to ask for your support of the Working Lands Enterprise Fund.

The Working Lands Enterprise Fund, administered by the Working Lands Enterprise Board (WLEB), makes catalytic investments in critical leverage points of the Vermont farm and forest economy. It's not only a smart investment, it is positively impacting the economy, culture, and communities of Vermont.

Since its inception in 2012, WLEB, with your support, has invested over \$4.5 million dollars in 149 projects impacting every county of the state, leveraging \$9 million in additional funds.

Over the last 6 years, working lands grantees have:

- **created 485 new full-time jobs**, and
- **generated \$26.5 million in new sales**

**That's a job is created for every \$10,000 invested.** It is almost impossible to identify any other state or federal program with that level of efficiency. Additionally, grantees report expanding into new markets, enhanced environmental stewardship, and increased employee wages as a result of their grant.

WLEB investments are creating jobs – good Vermont-made jobs the Vermont way – the type of jobs that honor Vermont's agriculture and forest heritage and celebrate our working landscape. WLEB investments are supporting entrepreneurs, innovators, and business owners in our farm, food, and forest sectors.

As you prepare your 2019 budget, we know that resources are under pressure. We also see a proven ROI from working lands investments that bring the right kind of jobs to the communities that need them throughout Vermont.

Results show that WLEB is worthy of the investment. **To that end, we ask that you continue your support of investment in WLEB and the working lands renaissance in the FY19 budget at \$700,000 which includes the Governor's recommend of \$594,000 plus \$106,000 additional investment from the general fund as proposed in H.924.**

Sincerely and with thanks of the Working Lands Coalition,

Paul Costello, *VCRD Executive Director*

For the Working Landscape Partnership and Coalition