

LEGISLATIVE BILL REVIEW FORM: 2015

Bill Number: H.485 **Name of Bill:** Agricultural and Rural Heritage Special

Agency/ Dept: Agriculture Author of Bill Review: Diane Bothfeld

Date of Bill Review: 3/27/15 **Related Bills and Key Players** _____

Status of Bill: (check one): ☒ Upon Introduction ☐ As passed by 1st body ☐ As passed by both

Recommended Position:

 Support **X** Oppose Remain Neutral Support with modifications identified in #8 below

Analysis of Bill

1. Summary of bill and issue it addresses. *Describe what the bill is intended to accomplish and why.*

Proposes to add ¼% to the rooms tax, create a fund to be used to financially support agricultural and rural heritage activities in the state including – Working Lands, Fairs, 2+2 program and Farm to School.

2. Is there a need for this bill? *Please explain why or why not.*

Funding for these programs comes from the general fund, and were cut in the rescission or to meet General Fund targets. The Agency values and in many cases provides staff support to these programs, however it does not recommend funding these programs through the addition of ½% to the rooms tax.

3. What are likely to be the fiscal and programmatic implications of this bill for this Department?

The staff exists at the agency to implement these granting programs at this time. This would have a limited effect on the Agency of Agriculture. These would be pass through dollars.

4. What might be the fiscal and programmatic implications of this bill for other departments in state government, and what is likely to be their perspective on it?

Tax Department would be responsible for collecting funds and segregating to new Ag and Rural Heritage fund.

5. What might be the fiscal and programmatic implications of this bill for others, and what is likely to be their perspective on it? (for example, public, municipalities, organizations, business, regulated entities, etc)

Tax Department may incur costs in the collection and segregation of funds.

6. Other Stakeholders:

6.1 Who else is likely to support the proposal and why?

Supporters would include Working Lands Coalition, Fair Association, VTC and UVM, state school systems, farmers, NOFA- VT, Green Mountain Farm to School and hunger organizations.

6.2 Who else is likely to oppose the proposal and why?

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Those opposed to raising taxes would be opposed. Possible that other agricultural or rural heritage activities would want funding as well.

7. Rationale for recommendation: *Justify recommendation stated above.*

This is a broad based tax and the Agency does not support this method of funding these programs.

8. Specific modifications that would be needed to recommend support of this bill: *Not meant to rewrite bill, but rather, an opportunity to identify simple modifications that would change recommended position.*

9. Gubernatorial appointments to board or commission?

Secretary/Commissioner has reviewed this document:



Date:

9-1-15