



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

*Office of Steven K. Reviczky
Commissioner*



October 8, 2015

Benjamin Barnes, Secretary
Office of Policy and Management
450 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106-1379

Dear Secretary Barnes:

This letter is in response to your memorandum requesting agencies submit options for reducing their General Fund operating budgets with realistic and achievable reduction options.

After careful examination of our agency's General Fund appropriation, I have determined that the Department of Agriculture cannot responsibly submit a reduction option equaling five percent, or more than \$265,000. I have asked each of my bureau directors to thoughtfully consider ways to reduce General Fund spending, and I have personally reviewed their recommendations in detail and determined that the options within the Department of Agriculture's General Fund are limited. Beyond the rescissions already incurred by the department, we could realize an additional savings in our OE budget of \$25,000 by shifting certain costs onto special funds. I believe that any further cuts would impair the agency's ability to meet its federal and state statutory and regulatory responsibilities.

More than 75% of our General Fund appropriation is for regulatory functions concerning public health and food safety. In fact, further reductions to the General Fund could inhibit the sale of certain agricultural and aquacultural commodities in the state.

The Department of Agriculture is already funded at the lowest levels required to meet our core mission. Over the last five years, we have seen a reduction in our General Funded authorized strength of 9.2%. Seventy-six percent of the General Fund available to the department is used for personnel, 10% is dedicated to the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program for qualifying senior citizens and WIC, and the remaining 14% is available for other expenses, most of which are contractual obligations. There is very little remaining for non-regulatory programmatic functions.

In completing this request, I have also examined other funding available to the department. While not funded through the General Fund, the department does have certain funding through the Community Investment Act that could be redirected, in whole or in part, that would not have an adverse impact on the agency, its mission or its personnel. Various Councils are funded through the CIA and the Connecticut Food Policy Council has a current balance of \$118,375.

Additionally, there is new funding included in the department's OE budget in the amount of \$110,000 that was not requested by the department. This was placed in our budget legislatively and intended for Urban Oaks in New Britain, Auer Farm in Bloomfield and the New Haven Land Trust. While we do not

165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106
Phone: 860-713-2501 Fax: 860-713-2514
An Equal Opportunity Employer

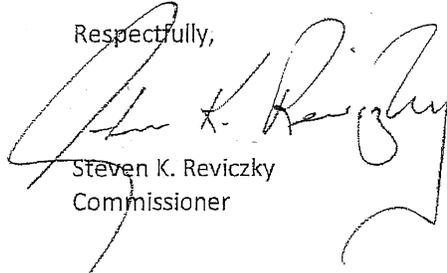
Page 2

recommend reducing this appropriation, it does represent new spending that was not sought by this agency.

I would be remiss if I did not point out that the agency is underfunded already, as can be demonstrated by the need for additional FAC funding twice in the last five years, and the release of holdbacks in a third year.

I look forward to discussing Agriculture's General Fund appropriation and agency needs at your convenience.

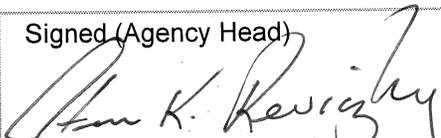
Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven K. Reviczky". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "S".

Steven K. Reviczky
Commissioner

Agency Option Submission

Department of Agriculture

Signed (Agency Head) 	Title COMMISSIONER	Date 10/9/15
--	-----------------------	-----------------

Fund	Agency Priority	Adjustment Title	FY 2017 Amount
11000 - General Fund			
		1 Reduction of Other Expenses	(25,000)
	Total		(25,000)
Total			(25,000)

Department of Agriculture

11000 - General Fund

Adjustment Type:

Reductions

Agency Title:

Reduction of Other Expenses

Agency Description:

To reduce other expenses by 25,000. This savings can be realized by shifting certain costs onto special funds.

Agency Priority:

1

System ID:

4539

SID		Agency 2017
Financials		
10020 - Other Expenses		(25,000)
Total Financials		(25,000)