

Resolution for Continued Support of the PA Farm Show Complex and Expo

WHEREAS, agricultural is Pennsylvania's number one industry;

WHEREAS, agriculture provides a foundation for everyone's daily life, providing essential milk and meat; and a wide range of other products, including gelatin, sausage casings, leather goods for function and sport, cosmetic products, paint brushes, components of tires, glue, fertilizer, photo film paper, combs, piano keys, violin strings, surgical sutures, insulin and many others products derived from farm animals;

WHEREAS, in 1916 Pennsylvania's Agriculture Secretary Charles E. Patton and other farm association officials recognized the need for a statewide educational event to showcase the latest in farm machinery and commodities;

WHEREAS, in 1919 after Gov. John Fisher visited potential sites for a statewide gathering and requested that the legislature appropriate funds to build a facility for the Pennsylvania Farm Show, the 40 -acre state-owned site at Cameron and Maclay Streets in Harrisburg was chosen as a permanent home;

WHEREAS, today more than ever, many Pennsylvanians lack hands-on experience with the agricultural community, educational aspects of the Farm Show are vital for the populace to understand the sourcing and benefits of food items and related commodities;

WHEREAS, of the more than 200 shows and events hosted by the PA Farm Show Complex and Expo Center, agricultural events including the PA Farm Show, the All-American Dairy Show, and the Keystone International Livestock Exposition bring many state and national visitors to the Commonwealth;

WHEREAS, the economic impact of the Capitol region as well as the entire state is significant to businesses that provide overnight lodging, fuel, food and shopping opportunities to attendees who spend on average \$28.61 during their visit to Harrisburg, adding \$98.4 million to the economies of Dauphin and Cumberland counties;

WHEREAS, during the three major agriculture shows each vendor adds \$1260 to the local economy and opportunity exists for more such shows;

WHEREAS, members of Future Farmers of America (FFA) and 4-H (a global network of organizations whose mission is to engage youth to reach their full potential while referencing the four H's: head, heart, hands, and health) are able to increase knowledge not only in agriculture, but as future leaders building skills through public speaking, record keeping, and team work; and

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania's growers of farm animals, fruits, vegetables, honey, maple syrup and other products require a venue to showcase their important contributions to the Commonwealth while educating Pennsylvanians of the health benefits, product quality, and sourcing of agricultural products;

THEREFORE, we call upon the Governor and General Assembly to assure that the PA Farm Show Complex and Expo Center is increasingly used for agricultural shows sponsored by the Commonwealth and state and national agricultural organizations in accord with the original purpose of the facility;

FURTHER, we call for funding for the Keystone International Livestock Exposition (KILE) and the All American Dairy Show (AADS) at the same level as the 2018 budget or higher. KILE and AADS have a strong youth component important to the future of Pennsylvania agriculture.

FINALLY, we resolve that in order to promote Pennsylvania's food products to the public, producers should continue to operate the Food Court with no charge, to earn monies without grants or taxpayer funding, while growing interest and consumption of Pennsylvania's agricultural products.

Mike Firestine, Chair  
Pennsylvania Ag Republicans  
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