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Voting Member Organizations

Allegheny Land Trust
Armstrong Trails
Allegheny Valley Trails Association
Appalachian Trail Conservancy
Armstrong County Conservancy
Berks Nature
Brandywine Conservancy
The Buck Hill Conservation Foundation
Central Pennsylvania Conservancy
Centre County Farmland Trust
Chesapeake Conservancy
Chestnut Hill Conservancy
ClearWater Conservancy
The Conservation Fund, Pennsylvania Office
Countryside Conservancy
Delaware Highlands Conservancy
Earth Conservancy
Edward L. Rose Conservancy
Evergreen Conservancy
Farm and Natural Land Trust of York County
Foundation for Sustainable Forests
Fox Chapel Area Land Trust
French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust
French Creek Valley Conservancy
Glade Run Lake Conservancy
Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association
Heritage Conservancy
Hollow Oak Land Trust
Independence Conservancy
Lackawanna Valley Conservancy
Lancaster Conservancy
Lancaster Farmland Trust
The Land Conservancy for Southern Chester County
Land Conservancy of Adams County
Land Trust of Bucks County
Lebanon Valley Conservancy
London Britain Land Trust
Manada Conservancy
Merrill Linn Land & Waterways Conservancy
Mid-Atlantic Karst Conservancy
Mokoma Conservancy
Montour Trail Council
Natural Lands
Neighborhood Gardens Trust
North American Land Trust
North Branch Land Trust
Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy
Open Land Conservancy of Chester County
Pensbury Land Trust
Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society
Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust
Pine Creek Land Conservation Trust
Pine Creek Valley Watershed Association
Pocono Heritage Land Trust
The Radnor Conservancy
Regional Trail Corporation
Schuylkill County Conservancy
Schuylkill River Greenways
Somerset County Conservancy
The Nature Conservancy
The Trust for Public Land
The Wallace Trust
Tinicum Conservancy
Western Pennsylvania Conservancy
Westmoreland Conservancy
Westmoreland Land Trust
Wild Waterways Conservancy Inc.
Wildlands Conservancy
Willistown Conservation Trust
Wissahickon Trails

September 30, 2020

Pennsylvania House of Representatives
Agricultural & Rural Affairs Committee

**Re: Support SB 881: leverage farm preservation funds
No cost to state; large conservation benefit**

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 70 member organizations of WeConservePA (formerly the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association) and their more than 100,000 Pennsylvania members, I write to request that you **support Senate Bill 881**. The bill presently sits before the Agricultural & Rural Affairs Committee. You can immediately help by requesting of the chair that a committee **vote be scheduled as soon as possible** and then voting in favor of it.

While imposing **no new costs on the Commonwealth**, SB 881 will **increase the volume of farm preservation** achieved by the state. It will accomplish this by directing a small portion—up to \$3 million annually—of the existing Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Fund to support the purchase of agricultural conservation easements by private, charitable land trusts. The increased quantity of farm preservation will result from the bill's requirement that land trusts **match state funding dollar for dollar**.

Land trust involvement in farm preservation delivers further public benefit in the long term by placing the responsibility and costs of managing the purchased agricultural conservation easements on the land trust rather than county and state government. (Land trusts have substantial experience raising philanthropic dollars to provide this management.)

SB 881 also will incentivize agricultural preservation by farmers belonging to plain sect communities, who are often reluctant to work with government.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Andrew M. Loza
Executive Director

cc: member organizations