

September 8, 2023

National Institute of Food and Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
P.O. Box 419205, MS 10000
Kansas City, MO 64141-6205

Re: UCONN USDA Solar/ Green Energy Project Proposal

Dear Review Committee and Program Officers:

The Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) is a voluntary Council of Governments formed to initiate and implement regional programs of benefit to the towns and the region. We are guided by the chief elected officials of our 38 Metro Hartford municipalities.

CRCOG is the largest of Connecticut's regional planning organizations with a population of 976,248 and a land area of 1,047 square miles. The CRCOG region is well-situated between New York City and Boston, and is rich in diversity, history, and natural resources.

We are pleased to support the application prepared by Dr. Morzillo, et. al., entitled "Green Energy Development for Production System Lands at Multiple Scales Considering Ecological and Social Impacts" for funding by the USDA. We believe that the University of Connecticut (UConn) would be an excellent collaborator to help engage member towns within our region in the workshops and events detailed in the proposal.

We feel strongly that UConn's proposed Green Energy Project would align with our efforts to enhance the region's sustainability, vitality, and economic health. This work would benefit the communities in our region as they seek to balance the interests of pursuing carbon neutral energy sources with promoting a healthy agroecosystem. Additionally, the project would complement several of our existing initiatives, including our regional climate action plan and the update to our regional Plan of Conservation & Development.

I greatly appreciate your agency's consideration of this application and urge your support.

Sincerely,



Matthew W. Hart
Executive Director

cc: Dr. Morzillo, University of Connecticut
CRCOG Policy Board & Regional Planning Commission
C. Palmer, Director of Regional Planning and Development