

⑥

FRPP - IFR - KEMP

Received 9/20/06 RJS

September 14, 2006

Charles Kemp  
2168 Canandaigua Road  
Macedon, NY 14502

Robert Glennon, Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program Manager  
Easement Program Division  
USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)  
1400 Independence Ave, SW Rm 6819-S  
- Washington, DC 20250-1400

Dear Mr. Glennon:

I am writing in response to the Interim Final Rule published on July 27, 2006 for the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP). FRPP has been an important partner to our local efforts to protect farmland and support our local farmers. In our town, nine farmers have worked with the town and land trust to protect over 2600 acres of land using FRPP and the New York State Farmland Protection Program funds. I have applied before and would have again this year, except for the ruling by NYSDAM that prohibited using FRPP funds for a project. If this conflict continues, I will not apply to either program in the future.

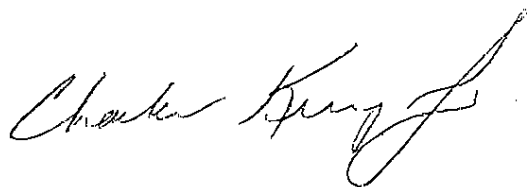
I am worried about the following issues outlined in the Interim Final Rule:

- ❖ I believe NRCS should not be a co-grantee. I have participated in various USDA programs with reporting requirements. An annual report from the town to NRCS combined with a right of third party enforcement, should assure the public that federal interests are protected. Maybe this change would lower the indemnification requirements a little, which seem pretty high for a restrictive easement in which the federal government only has the authority to enforce the easement, not make any management decisions.
- ❖ Our Town has received block grants for economic development projects in recent years. I don't understand why this program could not be viewed as an economic development program and utilize a block grant format. I believe it would be in the best interest of farmers, state and local agencies to change the FRPP to a block grant-type program for programs with an established track record.

We have been farming since 1920 and have adopted many new management tools. It is very important that any farmland protection easement be flexible enough to allow management to progress along with the rest of society.

I hope you will consider these concerns and make appropriate changes in order that more farmers, myself included, can utilize your program

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Charles Schumer". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the word "Sincerely,".

CC: U.S. Senator Hillary Clinton  
U.S. Senator Charles Schumer  
U.S. Congressman James Walsh  
Ron Alvarado, NRCS-NY State Conservationist  
Marilyn Stephenson, NRCS-NY FRPP Program Manager  
Patrick Brennan, Commissioner NYSDAM  
David Haight, American Farmland Trust