



NEWS

from the Illinois Senate

State Senator Jacqueline Y. Collins

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For More Information:
Ronald Holmes 217-782-0571

SENATE PASSES ILLINOIS LOCAL FOOD, FARMS AND JOBS ACT

SPRINGFIELD, IL— The Illinois Senate passed a bill today which will create jobs, economic opportunity and revitalize our rural and urban communities.

The Illinois Local Food, Farms and Jobs Act, introduced by Senator Jacqueline Collins, creates an economic development strategy by using the State's abundant resources: rich farmland, a temperate climate, a prosperous farming heritage and a large, diverse customer population. The Food, Farms and Jobs Act urges the State to expand markets for Illinois-grown organic foods and urges Illinois farmers to sell their products locally. It brings together people who specialize in all aspects of farming and business, from organic farmers and processors, to representatives from state agencies, municipalities and community organizations.

"Roughly 80% of Illinois is farmland; yet, we import 95% of the organic produce purchased in this State," Collins said. "This incongruity is alarming but it affords us an incredible opportunity to marry our economic interests with our public health interests."

House Bill 3990 will facilitate state institutions to source at least 20% of their food locally by 2020. In addition, the Local Food, Farms and Jobs Council will be created to coordinate the development of community-based farm and food networks statewide. By establishing policies that promote the sales of Illinois produce, the state will create jobs in the farming industry and improve the health of Illinoisans who have been far too reliant on unhealthy, processed food.

"Illinois is faced with a preponderance of fast food establishments," Collins said. "This bill will help provide fresh, healthy and easily accessible food in many of the state's underserved areas while putting Illinoisans to work."

The bill now heads back to the Illinois House of Representatives for concurrence.

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