



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

Office of the Commissioner



Bryan P. Hurlburt
Commissioner

860-713-2501
www.CTGrown.gov

September 16, 2020

Melanie A. Bachman
Executive Director
Connecticut Siting Council
10 Franklin Square
New Britain, CT 06051

Re: PETITION NO. 1424 - Southington Solar One, LLC petition for a declaratory ruling, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §4-176 and §16-50k, for the proposed construction, maintenance and operation of a 4.725-megawatt AC solar photovoltaic electric generating facility located at 1012 East Street, Southington, Connecticut, and associated electrical interconnection.

Dear Executive Director Bachman:

Pursuant to 16-50k(a) of the Connecticut General Statutes, we have reviewed the above cited project with respect to agricultural impacts. Although the developers have made an effort to maintain a co-use of the property, at this time the agency can not issue a determination on whether or not the project will have a material effect on the status of prime farmland.

The loss of 30 acres of prime farmland, which has been leased to an active farm business, will have a significant impact on both the tenant farmer and the surrounding community. Further, while the developers have offered similar mitigation measures for other recent projects (e.g., grazing sheep and pollinator seed mixes as co-use proposals), we believe the mitigation measures proposed for this particular project are insufficient to address the removal of an established tenant farmer growing on prime farmland soils.

Therefore, unless the concerns described herein are addressed, the Connecticut Department of Agriculture cannot make a representation to the Connecticut Siting Council that this project will not have a material effect on the status of prime farmland. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Stephen Anderson, at either Stephen.Anderson@ct.gov or at (860) 713-2592.

Sincerely,

Bryan P. Hurlburt
Commissioner

Cc: Katie Dykes, Commissioner, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
Lee Hoffman, Pullman & Comley LLC