



# MASSACHUSETTS FARM BUREAU FEDERATION, INC.

*"The Voice of Agriculture"*

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June 14, 2011

To: the Joint Committee on the Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture

From: MA Farm Bureau Federation

RE: ***Senate Bill 345***– *Authorizing a study relative to the health and stability of the Commonwealth's population of hemlock trees*

The Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) is the largest farm organization in the Commonwealth representing over 6,000 members and their families. On behalf of our members we would like to express our opposition to SB 345.

While the Massachusetts Farm Bureau is very supportive of the forestry industry and is cognizant of the effects of invasive pests, we **do not support** Senate Bill 345. To use a farming term – “the horse is already out of the barn”. In these tight fiscal times to study a problem that is already on the table and has been for over 10 years, is a waste of time, money and effort.

If the Commonwealth feels a need to do something in regard to this problem, it should demand proper management, thinning and harvesting on state lands to create a healthier forest which would in itself weaken the effect of this pest. The other opportunity would be to address the need for a market for hemlock, so that when these trees come out of the forest, they have an economic value, and are not just residue from a pest problem.

Contact

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