



The “*Future Farmers and Ranchers of Tomorrow Act*”

U.S. Senator Peter Welch

Legislation:

This bill would revise the “qualified beginning farmer or rancher” definition to allow non-related beginning farmers and ranchers to qualify for FSA loans as a joint entity.

Background:

The current language defining “qualified beginning farmer or rancher” requires in the case of a cooperative, corporation, partnership, joint operation, or such other legal entity that all members of such entity be related to one another by blood or marriage. The bill language would remove the requirement that members of a joint entity be related by blood or marriage.

The landscape of farming is evolving, and the number of new and beginning farmers has increased in the last few years. Today, beginning farmers are younger than established farmers, operate smaller farms, and are more racially diverse and female than other farmers. They form groups with other beginning farmers to pool financial resources to buy land but are not always related by blood or marriage. Removing this requirement will expand program eligibility to entities whose members are not related by blood or marriage but otherwise qualify as beginning farmers or ranchers.

Endorsing Organizations:

The *Future Farmers and Ranchers of Tomorrow Act* is endorsed by the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont, Rural Coalition, and National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition.