“My suggestions are as follows:

1) Suggest using vehicle similar to the Vermont Housing Authority Model for the property transfer tax to fund purchase of ag lands of significance under the State Constitution. Suggested amount is 5% and it should also apply to all timeshare sales transactions. This could be used to fund affordable housing in addition to providing funds for purchase of development rights and or ag parks for diversified farming operations.

2) The counties already have the authority under State law to put forth PDR/TDR legislation. In addition, all Counties have the ability to adopt farmland protection/preservation ordinances. Send forward a request to the State legislators that they produce a non-binding resolution to be sent to all counties urging them to enact PDR/TDR legislation and also urge them to adopt farmland protection laws so that the counties may tap into the Federal funds available under this program.

3) Enact agricultural tax incentive investment credit plan for capital improvements and job creation for small farmers and also for existing companies who invest in research programs that will diversify their scope of farming. I do not mean GMO experiments, but projects such as the composite board plant that A & B spent 10 million dollars to build in order to find use for their green harvested fibrous cane materials.

4) Give tax credits for those who lease lands to local farmers for terms of at least ten years, provisioned on the condition that they have placed permanent agricultural or conservation easements on the lands being leased.

5) Provide retraining programs for those farm workers who are losing or who have lost jobs due to plantation closures.”