



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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**Statement from State Representative Daniel E. Bosley (D-North Adams)**  
*Regarding the Massachusetts Senate attempt, in June 2000, to eliminate the Commonwealth's participation  
in the Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact*

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In June of 2000, 105 members of the Massachusetts House of Representatives became extremely concerned by the Senate's action, by a close vote of 22-17, to eliminate the Commonwealth's participation in the Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact. Led by Rep. Stephen Kulik of Worthington, and myself, this group strongly believed that the Compact was proving itself as good public policy, viewed as a model nationwide as a consumer-friendly and pro-environment agricultural initiative. As the Senate had elected to end the state's participation in an Outside Section of their version of the fiscal year 2001 budget, we urged House leadership and the members of the budget conference committee to support the Compact, by striking the relevant sections from the Senate budget draft.

It was widely understood that the move to kill the Compact in Massachusetts was being driven by political and profit motivations of Suiza Foods; a multi-billion dollar international food conglomerate, anxious to preserve its ability to control prices, contrary to the interests of both consumers and farmers. Last year this company controlled 80% of the fresh milk supply in the area.

The Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact was deemed crucial, not only by our state's dairy farmers, but also to many other groups, including consumers, sportsmen, and environmental advocates. It provides a safety net to New England's dairy farmers, kicking in only when the farmgate price is extremely low. Without the Compact retail milk prices could escalate up to 40 cents per gallon due to increased transportation costs, and the shelf life of fresh dairy products would be dramatically shortened. Participation in the Compact ensures a fresh, local milk supply at a reasonable cost, protects local processing jobs, and preserves over 108,000 acres of Massachusetts dairy land and about 1.4 million acres in New England.

When the budget conference committee released the final version of the budget for FY 01, the Senate's controversial proposal to withdraw Massachusetts from the Dairy Compact was not included. The opposition to this initiative by a majority of House members widely contributed to

the continuation of the Commonwealth's participation in the Compact. Massachusetts currently enjoys the privileges of membership in the Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact today.