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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Commissioners Correct CV Statement on County's Farmland Program

Carlisle, Pa. – The Cumberland Valley School District recently made incorrect statements about Cumberland County's Agriculture Conservation Easement Purchase (Farmland Preservation) program. During their May 24 town hall meeting, the school district stated that "no farmland under the Cumberland County program is preserved in perpetuity." This misstatement from the school district is not only inaccurate, but has caused undue harm to the County's farmland preservation program.

The Cumberland County Commissioners jointly stated, "Our office and our farmland preservation program office have received numerous inquiries from concerned citizens regarding the incorrect statements presented at the Cumberland Valley Area School District town hall meeting. This misinformation has shaken the public's trust in our easement program and as a result, the willingness of some property owners to commit to participate in the program has suffered immeasurably. Without the public's trust and confidence, the County's ability to practice responsible preservation, balanced with our continued growth, has been damaged beyond measure."

According to the Agriculture Security Area Law and section 10 in the Deed of Easement, "The agricultural conservation easement created by this Deed shall be a covenant running with the land and shall be effective in perpetuity. Every provision of this Deed applicable to the Grantor shall apply to the Grantor's heirs, executors, administrators, successors, assigns, agents, and any person, partnership, corporation or other entity claiming title under or through grantor."

The Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program was developed to strengthen Pennsylvania's agricultural economy and to protect prime farmland. The program uses county, state, federal and local funds to pay willing farmers to place certain restrictions upon their land, in order to maintain and

permanently preserve high quality, functional farmland. The land continues to be the farmer's private property and the farmer retains all privileges of land ownership, except the ability to sell the land for non-agricultural development or to develop the land for non-agricultural purposes. An agricultural conservation easement is permanent; if a landowner wishes to sell the land, the easement is transferred and the new landowner must continue to use the property exclusively for agriculture. Throughout the almost 30 year history of Pennsylvania's Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program, no condemnations of an entire preserved farm or a majority of a farm's acreage has ever been reported.

Since the inception of Cumberland County's Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program, almost 20,000 acres of prime farmland have been preserved in perpetuity. To learn more about this program and its importance to Cumberland County's agricultural industries, visit us online at www.ccpa.net/farmland.

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Cumberland County is the fastest growing county in the Commonwealth and offers the perfect mix of small town, suburban and rural living. Established in 1750, Cumberland County consistently maintains one of the lowest tax and unemployment rates in the State, while providing exceptional services for its more than 250,000 residents. More information on Cumberland County can be found at www.ccpa.net.