

**WASHINGTON, DC** –“ Congressman Joe Courtney today welcomed Robin Chesmer of Lebanon as his special guest to the State of the Union Address. Chesmer is the owner of Graywall Farms, and is a founding member and managing director of The Farmer’s Cow, a cooperative group of six eastern Connecticut dairy farms. As a new member of the House Agriculture Committee, Courtney met with Chesmer in advance of the speech to discuss issues important to the dairy community.

“I have worked closely with Robin and his fellow dairy farmers for the past four years, and I am honored that he was able to join me in Washington today,” said Courtney. “With nearly 2,500 farms in eastern Connecticut, agriculture and dairy policies were already front and center for me. But with a new perch on the House Agriculture Committee, I am even better positioned to advocate for our family farms and small businesses.”

Chesmer’s visit comes on the same day the House Agriculture Committee announced Subcommittee assignments. Courtney will serve on the Livestock, Dairy and Poultry Subcommittee, and on the Subcommittee on General Farm Commodities and Risk Management. Congressman Courtney is the founding co-chairman of the Congressional Dairy Farmers Caucus, and is the first member of the Connecticut House delegation to serve on the Agriculture Committee since Henry Stevens in the 59th Congress more than 100 years ago.

“It is a real honor for me – and for all of Connecticut agriculture – to be here tonight,” said Chesmer. “Congressman Courtney’s commitment to farmers is extraordinary. He has already brought a lot of attention to dairy and agriculture in our state. Now, with a spot on the Agriculture Committee, he will be even better prepared to fight for us.”

\*Photos of Courtney and Chesmer are available upon request\*