

7555

2013-2014 Regular Sessions

I N A S S E M B L Y

May 23, 2013

Introduced by M. of A. MAGEE -- read once and referred to the Committee
on Agriculture

AN ACT to amend the agriculture and markets law and the general municipal law, in relation to soil and water conservation district program improvements

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1 Section 1. Section 322 of the agriculture and markets law is amended
2 by adding a new subdivision 5 to read as follows:

3 5. "SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT" MEANS AN ENTITY AS DEFINED
4 IN SUBDIVISION ONE OF SECTION THREE OF THE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION
5 DISTRICTS LAW.

6 S 2. Section 323 of the agriculture and markets law, as amended by
7 chapter 268 of the laws of 2008, is amended to read as follows:

8 S 323. State agricultural and farmland protection program. The commis-
9 sioner shall initiate and maintain a state agricultural and farmland
10 protection program to provide financial and technical assistance, within
11 funds available, to counties, municipalities, SOIL AND WATER CONSERVA-
12 TION DISTRICTS, and not-for-profit conservation organizations for their
13 agricultural and farmland protection efforts. Activities to be conducted
14 by the commissioner shall include, but not be limited to:

15 1. developing guidelines for the creation by counties and munici-
16 palities of agricultural and farmland protection plans;

17 2. providing technical assistance to county agricultural and farmland
18 protection boards, as established in article twenty-five-AA of this
19 chapter, and municipalities;

20 3. administering state assistance payments to county agricultural and
21 farmland protection boards [and], municipalities AND SOIL AND WATER
22 CONSERVATION DISTRICTS;

23 4. disseminating information to county and municipal governments, SOIL
24 AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS, owners of agricultural lands and other

EXPLANATION--Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[] is old law to be omitted.

LBD08970-03-3

1 agricultural interests about the state agricultural and farmland
2 protection program established pursuant to this article;

3 5. administering state assistance payments to not-for-profit conserva-
4 tion organizations; and

5 6. reporting biennially to the governor and the legislature regarding
6 the activities of the commissioner, the types of technical assistance
7 rendered to county agricultural and farmland protection boards, munici-
8 palities, SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS and not-for-profit
9 conservation organizations, and the need to protect the state's agricul-
10 tural economy and land resources.

11 S 3. Subdivision 1 of section 325 of the agriculture and markets law,
12 as amended by chapter 234 of the laws of 2010, is amended to read as
13 follows:

14 1. Subject to the availability of funds, a program is hereby estab-
15 lished to finance through state assistance payments the state share of
16 the costs of [county and municipal] LOCALLY-LED agricultural and farm-
17 land protection activities. State assistance payments for planning
18 activities shall not exceed fifty thousand dollars to each county agri-
19 cultural and farmland protection board or one hundred thousand dollars
20 to two such boards applying jointly, and shall not exceed fifty percent
21 of the cost of preparing an agricultural and farmland protection plan.
22 State assistance payments for planning activities shall not exceed twen-
23 ty-five thousand dollars to each municipality other than a county or
24 fifty thousand dollars to two such municipalities applying jointly, and
25 shall not exceed seventy-five percent of the cost of preparing an agri-
26 cultural and farmland protection plan. A county which has an approved
27 farmland protection plan may after one hundred twenty months from the
28 date of such approval by the commissioner apply for additional state
29 assistance payments for planning activities related to the updating of
30 their current plan or development of a new farmland protection plan.
31 Such additional state assistance payments shall not exceed fifty thou-
32 sand dollars to each county agricultural and farmland protection board
33 or one hundred thousand dollars to two such boards applying jointly, and
34 shall not exceed fifty percent of the cost of preparing an agricultural
35 and farmland protection plan. State assistance payments for implementa-
36 tion of approved agricultural and farmland protection plans may fund up
37 to seventy-five percent of the cost of implementing the county plan or
38 portion of the plan for which state assistance payments are requested.
39 State assistance payments to such counties shall not exceed seventy-five
40 percent of the cost of implementing the local plan or portion of the
41 plan for which state assistance has been requested. Such maximum shall
42 be increased by a percentage equal to the percentage of the total eligi-
43 ble costs for such specified projects that are contributed by the owner
44 of the agricultural land for which the project is being funded,
45 provided, however, that in no event shall the total of such state
46 assistance payments exceed eighty-seven and one-half percent of such
47 eligible costs for any specified project.

48 S 4. Paragraphs (c) and (d) of subdivision 2 of section 325 of the
49 agriculture and markets law are relettered paragraphs (d) and (e) and a
50 new paragraph (c) is added to read as follows:

51 (C) A SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT MAY APPLY AND SHALL BE
52 ELIGIBLE FOR AGRICULTURAL PROTECTION STATE ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS TO IMPL-
53 MENT A COUNTY OR MUNICIPAL AGRICULTURAL AND FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN
54 APPROVED BY THE COMMISSIONER PROVIDED THAT THE PROPOSED PROJECT IS
55 ENDORSED FOR FUNDING BY THE COUNTY AGRICULTURAL AND FARMLAND PROTECTION
56 BOARD FOR THE COUNTY IN WHICH THE PROPOSED PROJECT IS LOCATED. A SOIL

1 AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, TWO SUCH SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION
2 DISTRICTS ACTING JOINTLY, A SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT AND A
3 MUNICIPALITY ACTING JOINTLY, OR A SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
4 AND A NOT-FOR-PROFIT CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION ACTING JOINTLY SHALL MAKE
5 APPLICATION TO THE COMMISSIONER IN SUCH MANNER AS THE COMMISSIONER MAY
6 PRESCRIBE. THE PROPOSED PROJECT MUST ALSO BE ENDORSED FOR FUNDING BY THE
7 MUNICIPALITY IN WHICH THE PROPOSED PROJECT IS LOCATED IF THE SOIL AND
8 WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT IS SEEKING AGRICULTURAL PROTECTION STATE
9 ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS TO IMPLEMENT AN APPROVED MUNICIPAL AGRICULTURAL AND
10 FARMLAND PROTECTION PLAN. STATE ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS TO SUCH SOIL AND
11 WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS SHALL NOT EXCEED SEVENTY-FIVE PERCENT OF
12 THE COST OF IMPLEMENTING THE LOCAL PLAN OR PORTION OF THE PLAN FOR WHICH
13 STATE ASSISTANCE HAS BEEN REQUESTED. SUCH MAXIMUM SHALL BE INCREASED BY
14 A PERCENTAGE EQUAL TO THE PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL ELIGIBLE COSTS FOR
15 SUCH SPECIFIED PROJECTS THAT ARE CONTRIBUTED BY THE OWNER OF THE AGRI-
16 CULTURAL LAND FOR WHICH THE PROJECT IS BEING FUNDED; PROVIDED, HOWEVER,
17 THAT IN NO EVENT SHALL THE TOTAL OF SUCH STATE ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS
18 EXCEED EIGHTY-SEVEN AND ONE-HALF PERCENT OF SUCH ELIGIBLE COSTS FOR ANY
19 SPECIFIED PROJECT. THE COMMISSIONER MAY REQUIRE SUCH INFORMATION OR
20 ADDITIONAL PLANNING AS HE OR SHE DEEMS NECESSARY TO EVALUATE SUCH A
21 REQUEST FOR STATE ASSISTANCE.

22 S 5. Subdivision 1 of section 119-o of the general municipal law, as
23 amended by chapter 623 of the laws of 1998, is amended to read as
24 follows:

25 1. In addition to any other general or special powers vested in munic-
26 ipal corporations and districts for the performance of their respective
27 functions, powers or duties on an individual, cooperative, joint or
28 contract basis, municipal corporations and districts shall have power to
29 enter into, amend, cancel and terminate agreements for the performance
30 among themselves or one for the other of their respective functions,
31 powers and duties on a cooperative or contract basis or for the
32 provision of a joint service or a joint water, sewage or drainage
33 project. Notwithstanding the foregoing grant of authority, the temporary
34 investment of moneys by more than one municipal corporation or district
35 pursuant to a municipal cooperation agreement which meets the definition
36 of "cooperative investment agreement" as set forth in article three-A of
37 this chapter shall be in compliance with all of the requirements of that
38 article. Any agreement entered into hereunder shall be approved by each
39 participating municipal corporation or district by a majority vote of
40 the voting strength of its governing body. Where the authority of any
41 municipal corporation or district to perform by itself any function,
42 power and duty or to provide by itself any facility, service, activity,
43 project or undertaking or the financing thereof is, by any other general
44 or special law, subject to a public hearing, a mandatory or permissive
45 referendum, consents of governmental agencies, or other requirements
46 applicable to the making of contracts, then its right to participate in
47 an agreement hereunder shall be similarly conditioned. MUNICIPAL CORPO-
48 RATIONS AND DISTRICTS SHALL ALSO HAVE THE POWER TO ENTER INTO, AMEND,
49 CANCEL AND TERMINATE AGREEMENTS WITH A SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION
50 DISTRICT ESTABLISHED UNDER THE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS LAW
51 FOR THE PERFORMANCE AMONG THEMSELVES OR ONE FOR THE OTHER OF THEIR
52 RESPECTIVE FUNCTIONS, POWERS AND DUTIES ON A COOPERATIVE OR CONTRACT
53 BASIS OR FOR THE PROVISION OF A JOINT SERVICE OR A JOINT PROJECT;
54 PROVIDED, HOWEVER, THAT THE EXERCISE OF ANY POWERS AND DUTIES UNDER THIS
55 ARTICLE BY A SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT SHALL BE SUBJECT TO

1 THE POWERS, DUTIES AND LIMITATIONS IN SECTION NINE OF THE SOIL AND WATER
2 CONSERVATION DISTRICTS LAW.
3 S 6. This act shall take effect immediately.