STATE OF NEW YORK

1470

2017-2018 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 9, 2017

Introduced by Sen. RITCHIE -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks and Recreation

AN ACT to direct the commissioner of the office of parks, recreation and historic preservation to develop a plan for the reimplementation of the barn grant program

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. The commissioner of the office of parks, recreation and historic preservation is hereby authorized and directed to work with the state comptroller and the board of the natural heritage trust to develop a plan for the reimplementation of the barn grant program of the year two thousand.

§ 2. The commissioner is directed to deliver a report to the chair of the senate agriculture committee within three months of the effective date of this act. The report shall make reference to previous audits of the former program and shall address the overall mandate of this act. The report shall address the following points:

(a) the viability of giving funds as reimbursement for costs incurred as opposed to giving funds up-front;

(b) ways to ensure grantees have access to appropriate legal counsel, or that grantees will be encouraged to seek legal counsel at all stages of their grant;

(c) the possibility of requiring that grantees submit business plans, undergo an audit, or otherwise demonstrate the viability of their venture as a condition of being awarded a grant;

(d) the availability of resources within state agencies to perform title searches and evaluate deed records;

(e) which, if any, private title search companies and independent project management groups have already been vetted by the office of general services;

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

LBD06755-01-7

(f) the appropriateness of utilizing the national heritage trust to receive and administer grant funds, particularly funds that might be given to private individuals and businesses.

§ 3. The report shall also explore the viability of using multiple application tracks such as:

(a) a strict reimplementation of the barn grant program using its original criteria; projects on properties listed in, or eligible for listing in, the National Register of Historic Places;

(b) projects that increase a facility's adaptability to extreme weather events;

(c) projects that will maintain the distinct architectural features of a barn or outbuilding though they will repurpose the structure to meet the current needs of the associated farm's business plan, so long as the building would not be used for human habitation.

§ 4. The commissioner is encouraged to consult the National Trust for Historic Preservation's "Historic Barns: Working Assets for Sustainable Farms" white paper for additional guidance.

§ 5. This act shall take effect immediately.