



103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2023 and 2024

HB2557

Introduced 2/15/2023, by Rep. Sonya M. Harper

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

New Act

Creates the Farmer Equity and Innovation Act. Subject to appropriation by the General Assembly and approval by the University of Illinois Board of Trustees, creates the Farmer Equity and Innovation Center at the University of Illinois Extension. Provides that the Farmer Equity and Innovation Center shall: (1) ensure the continued economic viability of small-scale and moderate-scale diversified farms and ranches by creating a coordinated, statewide program to support the operators of those farms and ranches, prioritizing limited resource farmers and ranchers and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers; (2) establish a Farmer Equity and Innovation Program administered by the Center; (3) utilize the University of Illinois Small Farm Advisors, and require the University to increase its Small Farm Advisor positions to 6 in number; (4) include applied research on specified subjects concerning farming and ranching in Illinois, outreach regarding those subjects, and informational services on assistance provided by or through the Center or nonprofit organizations designated by the Center; (5) authorize the Program to include special training for new and beginning farmers and ranchers, with priority given to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers; and (6) conduct a study to determine and issue an annual report to the Governor and General Assembly containing a demographic breakdown of farmers and ranchers who participate in the Program.

LRB103 25608 RLC 51957 b

1 AN ACT concerning agriculture.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Farmer
5 Equity and Innovation Act.

6 Section 5. Definitions. In this Act:

7 "Limited resource farmer or rancher" means a farmer or
8 rancher who has a total household income at or below the
9 national poverty level for a family of 4, or less than 50% of
10 the county median household income in each of the previous 2
11 years.

12 "Socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher" means a farmer
13 or rancher who has been subjected to racial or ethnic
14 prejudices because of their identity as a member of a group
15 without regard to their individual qualities.

16 Section 10. Farmer Equity and Innovation Center.

17 (a) Subject to appropriation by the General Assembly and
18 approval by the University of Illinois Board of Trustees, the
19 Farmer Equity and Innovation Center is created at the
20 University of Illinois Extension.

21 (b) The Farmer Equity and Innovation Center shall:

22 (1) ensure the continued economic viability of

1 small-scale and moderate-scale diversified farms and
2 ranches by creating a coordinated, statewide program to
3 support the operators of those farms and ranches,
4 prioritizing limited resource farmers and ranchers and
5 socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers;

6 (2) establish a Farmer Equity and Innovation Program
7 administered by the Center;

8 (3) utilize the University of Illinois Small Farm
9 Advisors, and require the University to increase its Small
10 Farm Advisor positions to 6 in number;

11 (4) include applied research on specified subjects
12 concerning farming and ranching in Illinois, outreach
13 regarding those subjects, and informational services on
14 assistance provided by or through the Center or nonprofit
15 organizations designated by the Center;

16 (5) authorize the Program to include special training
17 for new and beginning farmers and ranchers, with priority
18 given to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers; and

19 (6) conduct a study to determine and issue an annual
20 report to the Governor and General Assembly containing a
21 demographic breakdown of farmers and ranchers who
22 participate in the Program.