



# HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

## FISCAL NOTE

HOUSE BILL NO. 767

PRINTER'S NO. 1457

PRIME SPONSOR: Burgos

### COST / (SAVINGS)

| FUND         | FY 2022/23 | FY 2023/24        |
|--------------|------------|-------------------|
| General Fund | \$0        | See Fiscal Impact |

**SUMMARY:** HB 767 PN 1457 establishes the Pennsylvania Socially Diverse Farmers Commission. This legislation would take effect in 30 days.

**ANALYSIS:** The bill creates Chapter 13 (Pennsylvania Socially Diverse Farmers Commission) within Title 3 (Agriculture) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes.

The commission shall review and make findings and offer recommendations related to socially disadvantaged farmers in this Commonwealth. Specifically, the commission has the following powers and duties:

- Consult with and utilize experts to assist the commission in carrying out its duties;
- Receive input from interested parties;
- Hold public hearings (virtual may be utilized) in different regions of this Commonwealth;
- Review and consider diversity, equity and inclusion policies utilized throughout farming in the United States;
- Review the administration and operation of State and regional programs and services and make recommendations to implement new policies, statutes and regulations on improving opportunities for socially disadvantaged farmers; and
- Recommend proposed legislation and regulatory changes based on the commission's findings.

The Commission shall issue a report on the findings no more than one year after the date the commission convenes its first meeting.

The commission shall consist of 21 members and include 2 individuals appointed by the Governor, Secretaries of Agriculture, Community and Economic Development, Environmental Protection, Labor and Industry, and Revenue or a designee.

One individual shall be appointed by each of the following: President pro tempore of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Majority Leader of the Senate, Majority Leader of the House of Representatives, Minority Leader of the Senate, Minority Leader of the House of Representatives.

Other representation includes:

- A representative of the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau.
- A representative of PASA Sustainable Agriculture.
- A representative of The Pennsylvania State University

- A representative of Rodale Institute.
- A youth representative from 4-H and FFA
- A representative of Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences(MANRRS).

The commission shall hold its first meeting within 90 days of the effective date of this section, with a quorum based upon the number of members who have been appointed. The commission shall hold no fewer than six different meetings, and such meetings may be held virtually. The Department of Agriculture shall provide administrative support, meeting space and any other assistance required by the commission to carry out the commission's duties under this chapter.

Members of the commission may not receive compensation for services but may be reimbursed for all necessary travel and other reasonable expenses incurred in connection with the performance of the duties as members of the commission.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** Costs of the commission will primarily consist of reimbursements to commission members.

The 21 members of the commission can be divided into two groups: one group, consisting of 13 members who are either State or Legislative members, and the second group, consisting of 8 members, appointed by stakeholder organizations.

For State members, travel and lodging costs would be absorbed by their respective state agency. For Legislative members, their costs would be absorbed by their respective caucuses.

Costs related to the second group of members, would potentially have a fiscal impact. This analysis assumes the following reimbursement rates

- Reimbursement per mile - \$0.665 with assumed average distance traveled of 200 miles
- Lodging cost per meeting - \$98
- Subsistence cost per day - \$59
- Number of annual meetings – 6

Utilizing the reimbursement rates, the number of members to which such rates apply, and the number of meetings per year, it is estimated that annual costs for the Department of Agriculture would be less than \$15,000. This estimate does not take into consideration attending meetings virtually. If meetings were held virtually, costs would decrease as a proportion of the members attending virtually times the rates of reimbursement.

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**DATE:** June 21, 2023

*Estimates are calculated using the best information available. Actual costs and revenue impact incurred may vary from estimates.*