



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 389**

January Session, 2025

Substitute House Bill No. 5064

*House of Representatives, April 1, 2025*

The Committee on Environment reported through REP. PARKER of the 101st Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

## ***AN ACT ESTABLISHING A GRANT PROGRAM FOR AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION AND FARMLAND ACCESS PURPOSES.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1      Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) The Department of  
2      Agriculture, within available appropriations, may establish and  
3      administer a grant program for the purpose of providing grants to hold  
4      land for agricultural preservation purposes by any: (1) Agricultural not-  
5      for-profit organization qualified under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal  
6      Revenue Code of 1986, or any subsequent corresponding internal  
7      revenue code of the United States, as amended from time to time; (2)  
8      municipality; (3) group of municipalities; (4) regional council of  
9      governments organized under the provisions of sections 4-124i to 4-  
10     124p, inclusive, of the general statutes; or (5) group of municipalities  
11     that have established a regional interlocal agreement pursuant to  
12     sections 7-339a to 7-339l, inclusive, of the general statutes. In carrying  
13     out such purpose, any such grant may be expended for developing  
14     farmland access and affordability programs, other than such programs

15 that may exist as of the effective date of this section. No grant recipient  
16 shall utilize a grant distributed pursuant to such program for any  
17 purpose that conflicts with the preservation of farmland, as set forth in  
18 chapter 422 of the general statutes.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
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Section 1	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section
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**ENV**      *Joint Favorable Subst.*

*The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.*

## **OFA Fiscal Note**

### **State Impact:**

<b>Agency Affected</b>	<b>Fund-Effect</b>	<b>FY 26 \$</b>	<b>FY 27 \$</b>
Department of Agriculture	GF - Potential Cost	215,130	215,130
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits <sup>1</sup>	GF - Potential Cost	83,508	83,508
Department of Agriculture	GF - Potential Cost	Significant	Significant

Note: GF=General Fund

### **Municipal Impact:** None

### **Explanation**

The bill results in a potential significant annual cost to the Department of Agriculture (DoAG), beginning in FY 26, associated with the establishment of a new grant program to fund various agricultural land preservation. The bill allows but does not require DoAG to establish and administer the new grant program.

DoAG does not currently have the staff to establish and administer the new grant program and would require two new full-time positions, including: one Grant and Contract Specialist (annual salary of \$103,227) and one Property Agent 2 (annual salary of \$101,903). The additional full-time positions would result in a total cost of \$205,130 (corresponding fringe benefits of \$83,508) and approximately \$10,000 in other expenses.

<sup>1</sup>The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 40.71% of payroll in FY 26.

Additionally, DoAG would require additional grant funding, for selected grantees. It is estimated, based on similar programs, that an average eligible grant award would range from \$500,000 to \$1.5 million. The total cost of the grants would vary based on the number of grantees and the amount of each award.

***The Out Years***

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation and the amount of grants awarded annually.

**OLR Bill Analysis****sHB 5064****AN ACT ESTABLISHING A GRANT PROGRAM FOR AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION AND FARMLAND ACCESS PURPOSES.****SUMMARY**

This bill allows the Department of Agriculture, within available appropriations, to establish and administer a grant program to fund agricultural land preservation by agricultural nonprofits, municipalities, groups of municipalities, municipalities in a regional interlocal agreement, or regional councils of governments.

Under the bill, grantees may use the funds to develop new farmland access and affordability programs. Grants cannot be used for any purpose that conflicts with farmland preservation.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 33    Nay 0    (03/14/2025)