[First Reprint]

SENATE, No. 2620

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

216th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED DECEMBER 8, 2014

Sponsored by:

Senator STEVEN V. OROHO

District 24 (Morris, Sussex and Warren)

Senator SHIRLEY K. TURNER

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

SYNOPSIS

"New Jersey Rural Microenterprise Act."

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Senate Economic Growth Committee on January 7, 2016, with amendments.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/19/2014)

AN ACT concerning the operation of ¹rural ¹ microenterprises on preserved farms, amending ¹the title and body of ¹ P.L.2005, c.314, and designated as the "New Jersey Rural Microenterprise Act."

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BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

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- ¹1. The title of P.L.2005, c.314 is amended to read as follows:
- 10 AN ACT concerning [commercial nonagricultural] <u>rural</u>
 11 <u>microenterprise</u> activities and personal wireless service facilities
 12 on preserved farmland, and supplementing P.L.1983, c.32
 13 (C.4:1C-11 et seq.).¹

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- ¹[1.] <u>2.</u> ¹ Section 1 of P.L.2005, c.314 (C.4:1C-32.1) is amended to read as follows:
- 1. a. Any person who owns qualifying land **[**on which a development easement was conveyed to, or retained by, the committee, a board, or a qualifying tax exempt nonprofit organization pursuant to the provisions of section 24 of P.L.1983, c.32 (C.4:1C-31), section 5 of P.L.1988, c.4 (C.4:1C-31.1), section 1 of P.L.1989, c.28 (C.4:1C-38), section 1 of P.L.1999, c.180 (C.4:1C-43.1), or sections 37 through 40 of P.L.1999, c.152 (C.13:8C-37 through C.13:8C-40) **[** may apply for a special permit pursuant to this section to allow a **[**commercial nonagricultural activity **]** rural microenterprise ¹activity ¹ to occur on the land.
- b. The committee, in its sole discretion, may issue a special permit pursuant to this section to the **[**landowner if the development easement is owned by the committee owner of the premises 1 if the development easement is owned by the committee or a board. If the development easement is owned by a qualifying tax exempt nonprofit organization, the committee, in consultation with the qualifying tax exempt nonprofit organization, may issue a special permit pursuant to this section to the owner of the premises¹. The committee [and the board, in their joint discretion, may authorize the committee to issue a special permit pursuant to this section to the landowner if the shall provide the holder of any development easement [is owned by a board. The committee and the qualifying tax exempt nonprofit organization, in their joint discretion, may authorize the committee to issue a special permit pursuant to this section to the landowner if on the farm with a copy of the application submitted for the purposes of subsection a. of this section, and the holder of the development easement [is owned by a

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

- 1 qualifying tax exempt nonprofit organization shall have 30 days
- 2 after the date of receipt thereof to provide comments to the
- 3 committee on the application. Within 90 days after receipt of a
- 4 completed application, submitted for the purposes of subsection a.
- 5 of this section, the committee shall approve, approve with 6 conditions, or disapprove the application.
- 7 c. (1) There shall be ¹[three] two ¹ categories of rural 8 microenterprise activities, as follows:
- 9 (a) Class 1 shall include customary rural activities, which rely 10 on the equipment and aptitude historically possessed by the agricultural community, ¹[including, but not limited to,] such as ¹ 11 12 snow plowing, bed and breakfasts, bakeries, woodworking, and craft-based businesses; ¹and ¹ 13

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- (b) Class 2 shall include agriculture support services, which have a direct and positive impact on agriculture by supplying needed equipment, supplies, and services to the surrounding agricultural community, ¹[including, but not limited to,] such as ¹ veterinary practices, seed suppliers, and tractor or equipment repair shops ¹[; and
- (c) Class 3 shall include unrelated microenterprises, which have no direct relationship with the agricultural use of the property or the surrounding agricultural community, including, but not limited to, dog boarding services, professional office space, and personal training studios.
- (2) Class 1 and Class 2 activities shall be preferred for permitting purposes : 1.1
- d. A special permit may be issued pursuant to this section provided that:
- (1) the <u>owner of the premises establishes</u>, through the submission of tax forms, sales receipts, or other appropriate documentation, as directed by the committee, that (a) the qualifying land is a commercial farm as defined pursuant to section 3 of P.L.1983, c.31 (C.4:1C-3), and (b) the owner of the premises is a farmer, as defined pursuant to subsection ¹[i.] k. ¹ of this section;
- (2) Ithere is no commercial nonagricultural activity already in 35 36 existence on the land at the time of application for the special 37 permit or on any portion of the farm that is not subject to the 38 development easement, except that the committee may waive the 39 requirements of this paragraph, either entirely or subject to any 40 appropriate conditions, (a) if such preexisting commercial 41 nonagricultural activity is deemed to be of a minor or insignificant 42 nature or to rely principally upon farm products, as defined 43 pursuant to R.S.4:10-1, derived from the farm, or (b) for other good 44 cause shown by the applicant; I the owner of the premises, or an 45 immediate family member thereof, is the same person who owns
- 46 and operates the rural microenterprise;

1 (3) 1 the permit is for one [commercial nonagricultural activity] rural microenterprise only;

- ${}^{1}\mathbf{[}(4)\mathbf{]}(3){}^{1}$ no more than one permit $\mathbf{[}$ may be $\mathbf{]}$ is valid at any one time for use on the <u>qualifying</u> land;
- 5 ¹[(5)] (4)¹ the permit is for a maximum <u>duration</u> of 20 years [duration];
 - ${}^{1}[(6)]$ (5) the permit does not run with the land and may not be assigned;
 - ¹**[**(7)**]** (6)¹ **[**the commercial nonagricultural activity utilizes, or is supported through the occupation of, a structure or structures existing on the date of enactment of this act, except that the permit may authorize, subject to the requirements of paragraph (12) of this subsection, an expansion of an existing structure or structures which expansion does not exceed 500 square feet in footprint area in total for all of the structures, provided that, for any such expansion, the applicant demonstrates to the satisfaction of the committee that:
 - (a) the purpose or use of the expansion is necessary to the operation or functioning of the commercial nonagricultural activity;
 - (b) the area of the proposed footprint of the expansion is reasonably calculated based solely upon the demands of accommodating the commercial nonagricultural activity and does not incorporate excess space; and
 - (c) the location, design, , height, and aesthetic attributes of the expansion reflect the public interest of preserving the natural and unadulterated appearance of the landscape and structures;
 - (8) the [commercial nonagricultural activity] <u>rural</u> microenterprise does not interfere with the use of the <u>qualifying</u> land for agricultural ¹ or horticultural ¹ production;
 - [(9)] ¹[(8)] (7)¹ the [commercial nonagricultural activity] <u>rural microenterprise</u> utilizes the land and structures in their existing condition [except as allowed otherwise pursuant to paragraph (7) of this subsection] ¹[, and is undertaken in compliance with the use restrictions prescribed by subsection e. of this section], except as allowed in accordance with the use restrictions prescribed in <u>subsection g. of this section</u>¹;
 - [(10)] ¹[(9)] (8)¹ the [commercial nonagricultural activity] total area of land and structures devoted to supporting the rural microenterprise does not exceed a one-acre envelope on the qualifying land;
 - ¹[(10)] (9)¹ the rural microenterprise does not have an adverse impact upon the soils, water resources, air quality, or other natural resources of the land or the surrounding area [, and does not involve the creation of additional parking spaces whether paved or unpaved]; and
- 45 ¹[(11)] (10)¹ the [commercial nonagricultural activity] <u>rural</u> 46 <u>microenterprise</u> is not a high traffic volume business [; and (12)

- any necessary local zoning and land use approvals and any other applicable , and is undertaken in compliance with the parking and employment restrictions prescribed by subsection ¹[f.] h. ¹ of this section.
 - e. ¹The owner of the premises may apply to the committee to renew a permit within 10 years before the date of the scheduled permit expiration. The committee shall review the renewal application in accordance with the process and criteria set forth in this section for the issuance of a special permit, including the consultation required by subsection b. of this section.
 - f. The committee shall provide reasonable opportunity for the continued operation of a rural microenterprise in the event of:
 - (1) the death, incapacitation, or retirement of the owner of the premises;
 - (2) transfer of the ownership of the farm; or

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- (3) disruption of income from gross sales of agricultural or horticultural products, caused by circumstances beyond the farmer's control, such as crop failure.
- g. The use of land and structures for a rural microenterprise activity shall be subject to the following conditions and restrictions:
- 21 (1) A structure that is designated in the deed of easement as 22 agricultural labor housing, or a structure that has been constructed 23 or designated as agricultural labor housing since the date of the 24 conveyance of the easement, shall not be used for the rural 25 microenterprise;
 - (2) No new '[buildings] structures' may be constructed on the premises to support a rural microenterprise. Any '[building] structure' constructed on the premises since the date of the conveyance of the easement, and in accordance with the farmland preservation deed restrictions, shall not be eligible for a special permit for a rural microenterprise for a period of five years following completion of its construction;
- 33 (3) Improvements shall not be made to the interior of a nonresidential structure in order to adapt it for residential use;
- 35 (4) ¹The entire floor area of existing residential or agricultural 36 building space may be used to support a rural microenterprise where 37 the building has not been substantially altered or finished to support 38 the microenterprise;
- (5) No more than 2,500 square feet of the interior of [an] 39 existing residential or agricultural ¹[structure] building space ¹ may 40 be substantially altered or finished to support the rural 41 microenterprise, except that, at the request of the owner of the 42 43 premises, the committee may allow the alteration or finishing of up to 100 percent of ¹[the interior of] ¹ an existing ¹[historic building 44 or heritage farm structure, provided that the owner agrees to place 45 on the structure, in a form approved by the committee, ¹ [an historic 46
- 47 <u>preservation restriction</u>] <u>a heritage preservation easement</u>¹, which

- shall be recorded against the premises, shall be held by the committee, and shall run with the land;
- 3 ${}^{1}[(5)]$ $(6)^{1}$ The expansion of ${}^{1}[an]^{1}$ existing ${}^{1}[structure]$ building space¹ shall be permitted, provided that: (a) the expansion 4 5 does not exceed 500 square feet in total footprint area; (b) the 6 purpose or use of the expansion is necessary to the operation or 7 functioning of the rural microenterprise; and (c) the area of the 8 proposed footprint of the expansion is reasonably calculated, based 9 solely upon the demands of accommodating the rural 10 microenterprise, and does not incorporate excess space;
 - ¹[(6)] (7)¹ Improvements to the exterior of a structure shall be compatible with the agricultural character of the premises, and shall not diminish the historic ¹or cultural ¹ character of the structure;

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- ¹[(7)] (8) Repairs may be made to the interior or exterior of a building provided that they do not diminish the historic or cultural character of the structure;
- (9)¹ The location, design, height, and aesthetic attributes of the rural microenterprise shall reflect the public interest of preserving the natural and unadulterated appearance of the landscape and structures;
- ¹[(8)] (10)¹ No public utilities, including water, gas, or sewage, other than those already existing and available on the qualifying land, shall be permitted to be extended to the qualifying land for purposes of the rural microenterprise, except that the establishment of new electric service required for the rural microenterprise shall be permitted; ¹[and]
- (9) (11) On-site septic and well facilities may be established, expanded, or improved for the purpose of supporting the rural microenterprise provided such facilities are contained within the one-acre envelope provided for in paragraph (8) of subsection d. of this section; and
- 32 (12)¹ No more than a combined total of 5,000 square feet of land 33 may be utilized for the ¹[establishment, expansion, or improvement of wastewater or water supply facilities, or for the outside storage 34 35 of equipment, vehicles, supplies, products, or by-products, in 36 association with the microenterprise. Any improvements to the land ¹[, which] that ¹ are undertaken for the purposes described in this 37 paragraph ¹[,] or paragraph (11) of this subsection ¹ shall be limited 38 39 to those that are necessary either to protect public health and safety 40 or to minimize disturbance of the premises and its soil and water 41 resources.
- 44 (1) The area dedicated to ¹customer ¹ parking shall not exceed 45 2,000 square feet or provide for more than 10 parking spaces;

- 1 (2) ¹ Each parking space shall not exceed 10 feet by 20 feet in 2 size;
- 3 (3) Improvements to the parking area shall be limited to those
 4 improvements that are required to protect public health and safety
 5 or minimize the disturbance of soil and water resources on the
 6 premises;

- ¹(3) The number of parking spaces shall be sufficient to accommodate visitors to the rural microenterprise under normal conditions; and ¹
- (4) At peak operational periods, the maximum number of
 employees or workers 'who are' associated with the rural
 microenterprise and work on the premises' shall not exceed four
 full-time employees, or the equivalent, in addition to the owner or
 operator 'I; and
 - (5) the number of employees and visitors to the rural microenterprise, and the volume and frequency of deliveries and truck and other vehicle traffic associated therewith shall not, at any time, exceed the number of designated parking spaces on the qualifying land, or create a nuisance for neighboring properties or the municipality 1.
 - ¹[g.] i. ¹ Committee approval of a special permit for a rural microenterprise activity pursuant to this section shall not relieve the applicant from obtaining all other permits, approvals, or authorizations that may be required by federal, State, or local law, rule, regulation, or ordinance [are obtained for the commercial nonagricultural activity.
 - d. In addition to those factors enumerated under subsection c. of this section, the committee, in evaluating an application for a special permit, shall also consider such additional factors as traffic generated and the number of employees required by the proposed commercial nonagricultural activity so as to limit to the maximum extent possible the intensity of the activity and its impact on the land and the surrounding area \mathbb{1}.
 - ¹[h.] j. ¹ (1) A rural microenterprise shall not be considered to be an agricultural use as defined in subsection b. of section 3 of P.L.1983, c.32 (C.4:1C-13).
- 37 (2) Nothing in this section shall be interpreted as providing a
 38 rural microenterprise with protection under section 6 of the "Right
 39 to Farm Act," P.L.1983, c.31 (C.4:1C-9) if that rural
 40 microenterprise is not otherwise eligible for such protection.
- **[e.]** 1 **[i.]** ${\underline{k}}$. For the purposes of this section:
- I"Commercial nonagricultural activity" shall not include a personal wireless service facility as defined and regulated pursuant to section 2 of this act;
- 45 <u>"Farmer" means the owner and operator of the premises who</u>
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(1) exclusive of any income received from the rental of lands, 1 2 realized gross sales of at least \$2,500 for agricultural or 3 horticultural products produced on the premises during the calendar 4 year immediately preceding submission of a special permit 5 application ¹[. 6 "Historic building or structure" means the same as that term is 7 defined pursuant to subsection c. of section 2 of P.L.2001, c.405 8 (C.13:8C-40.2). 9 "Historic preservation restriction" means the same as that term is 10 defined pursuant to subsection d. of section 2 of P.L.1979, c.378 (C.13:8B-2).]; and 11 12 (2) continues to own and operate the premises and meet that 13 income threshold every year during the term of the permit. 14 "Heritage farm structure" means a building or structure that is significantly representative of New Jersey's agrarian history or 15 culture and that has been designated as such by the committee 16 17 exclusively for the purposes of sections 1 and 3 of P.L.2005, c.314 18 (C.4:1C-32.1 and C.4:1C-32.3). 19 "Heritage preservation easement" means an interest in land less than fee simple absolute, stated in the form of a deed restriction 20 21 executed by or on behalf of the owner of the land, appropriate to 22 preserving a building or structure that is significant for its value or 23 importance to New Jersey's agrarian history or culture, and to be 24 used exclusively for the purposes of implementing sections 1 and 3 of P.L.2005, c.314 (C.4:1C-32.1 and C.4:1C-32.3), to limit 25 26 alteration in exterior form or features of such building or structure. 27 ¹["Immediate family member" means a spouse, child, parent, 28 sibling, grandparent, grandchild, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-29 in-law, daughter-in-law, stepparent, stepchild, stepbrother, 30 stepsister, half brother, or half sister of the owner of the premises, 31 whether the individual is related by blood, marriage, or adoption.]1 "Owner of the premises" means the person or entity who 32 ¹[owned] owns ¹ qualifying land ¹[on the date on which a 33 development easement was conveyed to, or retained by, the 34 committee, a board, or a qualifying tax exempt nonprofit 35 36 organization, and who has continuously owned the qualifying land since that date; or an immediate family member of such person; or, 37 38 in cases where such person applied for and was issued a permit for a rural microenterprise, all successors in title thereto 1¹. 39 40 "Qualifying land" means a farm [that was preserved for farmland preservation purposes on which a development easement was 41 conveyed to, or retained by, the committee, a board, or a qualifying 42 tax exempt nonprofit organization prior to ¹January 12, 2006, ¹ the 43 date of enactment of Ithis act under any of the laws cited in 44 subsection a. of this section 1 P.L., c. (C.) (pending 45

before the Legislature as this bill) P.L.2005, c.314 (C.4:1C-32.1 et

- 1 seq.)¹, and in accordance with the provisions of section 24 of
- 2 P.L.1983, c.32 (C.4:1C-31), section 5 of P.L.1988, c.4 (C.4:1C-
- 3 31.1), section 1 of P.L.1989, c.28 (C.4:1C-38), section 1 of
- 4 P.L.1999, c.180 (C.4:1C-43.1), or sections 37 through 40 of
- 5 P.L.1999, c.152 (C.13:8C-37 through C.13:8C-40), and for which
- no portion of the farm was excluded <u>from preservation</u> in the deed
- 7 of easement [from preservation; and].
 - "Qualifying tax exempt nonprofit organization" [shall have the same meaning as set forth in] means the same as that term is defined pursuant to section 3 of P.L.1999, c.152 (C.13:8C-3).
- "Rural microenterprise" means a small-scale business or activity
 that is fully compatible with agricultural use and production on the
 premises, does not, at any time, detract from, diminish, or interfere
 with the agricultural use of the premises, and is incidental to the
 agricultural use of the premises. "Rural microenterprise" shall not
 include a personal wireless service facility as defined and regulated
- pursuant to section 2 of P.L.2005, c.314 (C.4:1C-32.2).
 (cf: P.L.2005, c.314, s.1)
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- ¹[2.] <u>3.</u> Section 3 of P.L.2005, c.314 (C.4:1C-32.3) is amended to read as follows:
- to read as follows:
 3. a. The application fee for a special permit authorized
- 23 pursuant to [either] section 1 [or] of P.L.2005, c.314 (C.4:1C-
- 24 32.1) shall be \$250. The application fee for a special permit
- 25 <u>authorized pursuant to section 2 of [this act] P.L.2005, c.314</u>
- 26 (C.4:1C-32.2) shall be \$1,000 [,] . All application fees shall be
- payable to the committee regardless of whether or not a permit is issued. All proceeds from the collection of application fees by the
- issued. All proceeds from the collection of application fees by the
- committee pursuant to [this act] P.L.2005, c.314 (C.4:1C-32.1 et seq.) shall be utilized by the committee for farmland preservation
- 31 purposes.
- b. The committee may suspend or revoke a special permit
- issued pursuant to [either] section 1 or [section] 2 of [this act for a
- 34 violation of P.L.2005, c.314 (C.4:1C-32.1 or C.4:1C-32.2) if the
- 35 permittee violates any term or condition of the permit, or any
- provision of the [respective] applicable statutory section.
- c. [The committee shall, within 60] (1) In order to expedite
- 38 the review and approval of routine applications for a special permit,
- 39 which have been submitted pursuant to section 1 or 2 of P.L.2005,
- 40 <u>c.314 (C.4:1C-32.1 or C.4:1C-32.2)</u>, the committee may delegate to
- 41 <u>its executive director, by resolution, the authority to review and</u>
- 42 approve an application. The delegation of review and approval
- 43 <u>authority pursuant to this subsection shall be authorized by the</u>
- 44 <u>committee only in those cases where (a) the committee has not</u>
- 45 received comments from the board or a qualifying nonprofit
- 46 <u>organization concerning the potential negative impacts of an</u>
- 47 application's approval, and (b) the application complies with all

provisions of P.L.2005, c.314 (C.4:1C-32.1 et seq.) and the rules and regulations adopted pursuant thereto.

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- (2) An applicant whose application is denied by the executive director may appeal the decision to the committee.
- (3) Nothing in this subsection shall preclude the executive director from bringing any application before the committee for review and approval, when such action is deemed by the executive director to be appropriate.
- 9 d. ¹[If an applicant is aggrieved by an action of the] The¹ committee ¹[, which has been undertaken] may take action to deny 10 11 an application for a special permit or to suspend or revoke a special permit issued¹ pursuant to P.L.2005, c.314 (C.4:1C-32.1 et seq.) 12 ¹[in association with an application for, or suspension or revocation 13 14 of, a special permit, the applicant may submit to the committee, a 15 written request for a hearing on the matter, within 20 days after 16 receipt of notice of the committee's action]. The applicant or 17 permittee shall be afforded the opportunity for a hearing prior to the 18 committee taking any such action¹.
- 19 e. Within ¹[180 days] two years ¹ after the date of enactment 20 of Ithis act, develop guidelines for the implementation and 21 administration of this act, including, but not limited to <u>P.L.</u>, 22) (pending before the Legislature as this bill), the 23 committee shall adopt rules and regulations, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et 24 25 seq.), as is necessary to implement and administer the provisions of P.L.2005, c.314 (C.4:1C-32.1 et seq.), as amended by P.L. , 26 27 c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill). These 28 rules and regulations shall include, at a minimum, procedures and 29 standards for the filing, evaluation, and approval of special permit 30 applications, which procedures and standards shall seek to balance, 31 as equally important concepts, the public interest in : (1) protecting 32 farmland from further development as a means of preserving agriculture [and]; (2) protecting ¹[historically significant 33 agricultural heritage farm structures and enhancing the beauty 34 35 and character of the State and the local communities where 36 farmland has been preserved [with the public interest in]; and (3) 37 providing support to sustain and strengthen the agricultural industry 38 in the State.
- Id.] <u>f.</u> Every two years, the committee shall prepare a report on the implementation of [this act] <u>P.L.2005</u>, <u>c.314</u> (<u>C.4:1C-32.1</u> et seq.), as amended by <u>P.L.</u>, <u>c.</u> (<u>C.</u>) (pending before the Legislature as this bill). The report shall include a survey and inventory of <u>:</u>
- 44 (1) all [commercial nonagricultural] <u>rural microenterprise</u> 45 activities occurring [on], and [of] all personal wireless service

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- facilities placed on [,] preserved farmland in accordance with this act] the provisions of P.L.2005, c.314 (C.4:1C-32.1 et seq.);
- (2) the extent to which existing structures, such as barns, sheds,
 and silos, are used for [those] the purposes identified in paragraph
 (1) of this subsection, and [how] the manner in which those
 existing structures have been modified [therefor] to serve those
 purposes;
 - (3) the extent to which new structures, instead of existing structures, have been erected to host personal wireless service facilities , and the number and type of new structures used to disguise those facilities, such as artificial trees and faux barns, sheds, and silos;
 - (4) the extent to which ¹[historically significant] heritage farm ¹

 structures have been protected through the placement thereon of
 ¹[historic preservation restrictions] heritage preservation
 easements ¹; and [such]
 - (5) any other information [as] the committee deems useful.
 - [The] Any report prepared pursuant to this subsection shall be transmitted to the Governor, and, in accordance with the provisions of section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), to the President of the Senate [,] and the Speaker of the General Assembly, as well as to the respective chairpersons of the Senate Economic Growth Committee, the Senate Environment and Energy Committee, the Assembly Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, and the Assembly Environment and Solid Waste Committee, or their designated successors. Copies of the report shall also be made available to the public upon request and free of charge, and shall be posted at a publicly-accessible location on the committee's Internet website [of the State Agriculture Development Committee.
 - e. The committee shall adopt, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), any rules and regulations necessary to carry out the purposes of this act].
- 33 (cf: P.L.2005, c.314, s.3)

¹[3.] <u>4.</u> This act shall take effect immediately.