

ASSEMBLY SCIENCE, INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 4763

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: OCTOBER 17, 2022

The Assembly Science, Innovation and Technology Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 4763.

As reported, this bill establishes the “Climate-Resilient Crop Grant Program” (program) in the Department of Agriculture (department). The program provides grants to owners of vertical farms in the State to study the viability of growing climate-resilient crop species in the State.

The department is required to provide grants of between \$50,000 and \$100,000, for up to 100 percent of total project costs to persons that apply successfully for a grant. The bill establishes certain eligibility criteria for the program, including that the project simulate the climactic and soil conditions that are likely to result from climate change in the State, and provide data on the viability of one or more climate-resilient crops, which can be used to establish best practices for the growth of climate-resilient crops outdoors in the State. The bill also directs the department to request annually, as part of its annual budget proposal, a minimum of \$200,000 to fund the grants and to partner with other State and federal agencies to seek any available federal, State, local, and private funding to fund the grants. The bill appropriates \$200,000 to fund the first round of grants. Finally, the bill requires the department to adopt rules and regulations to implement the program.