

SENATE ECONOMIC GROWTH COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2669

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: FEBRUARY 16, 2023

The Senate Economic Growth Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 2669.

As reported, this bill amends and supplements the “Right to Farm Act” to provide that housing for the resident farm employees of a commercial farm would be a permissible activity and eligible for Right to Farm protections.

The bill directs the State Agriculture Development Committee to adopt an agricultural management practice (AMP) that permits the housing of resident farm employees. Specifically, the AMP would: (1) authorize, notwithstanding any local health code or zoning ordinance to the contrary, the construction, installation, and provision of housing for a resident farm employee; (2) specify the requirements of allowable housing and provide that the housing may be on a permanent or nonpermanent foundation; and (3) identify the types of farm animals that require the presence of a farm employee on a full-time, year-round basis, thereby requiring a resident farm employee.

The bill defines “resident farm employee” as a person employed by the owner or operator of a commercial farm whose presence is required on a full-time, year-round basis to provide proper care and ensure the safety of farm animals on the commercial farm. The term does not include a migrant, seasonal, or temporary employee, or a full-time, year-round equine-related farm employee, and the bill does not apply to any housing provided for these types of employees.