

ASSEMBLY SCIENCE, INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 4692

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: OCTOBER 17, 2022

The Assembly Science, Innovation and Technology Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 4692.

As reported, this bill establishes in the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education (office) the “Vertical Farming in Higher Education Grant Program” (program). The bill also appropriates \$250,000 from the General Fund to the office to fund the program.

Under the bill, the grant program will support public institutions of higher education that use, or plan to use, vertical farming techniques to grow food for use or sale at student dining venues or for distribution through campus food banks or food pantries. The bill directs the Secretary of Higher Education (secretary) to, after consultation with the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, award grants to public institutions of higher education to defray the costs, either in whole or in part, associated with developing or maintaining a vertical farming system.

The bill provides that a public institution of higher education may apply to the secretary for a grant. The application is required to include information on the type of vertical farming system maintained, or planned, by the institution and how produce grown through the system is to be used or distributed. The grants will be awarded in amounts determined by the secretary.

“Vertical farming” is defined under the bill as the practice of growing produce in vertically stacked layers and may use soil, hydroponic, or aeroponic growing methods.