ASSEMBLY, No. 1585

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:
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SYNOPSIS

Establishes NJ Native Seed Commission to develop plan to increase production and use of native seeds in State.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.

AN ACT concerning the production and use of native seeds in the State.

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

1. a. There is established in the Department of Agriculture the New Jersey Native Seed Commission. The purpose of the commission shall be to develop a plan to:

(1) increase the production of native seeds in the State;

(2) increase the use of native seeds in public land management, roadside landscaping, reforestation, habitat restoration, and other projects as determined by the commission; and

(3) ensure that native seeds are commercially available in the State at a reasonable cost and in adequate supply.

b. The commission shall consist of 9 members as follows:

(1) The Secretary of Agriculture, the Commissioner of Environmental Protection, and the Commissioner of Transportation, who shall serve ex officio, or their respective designees; and

(2) the following public members, appointed by the Governor:

(a) one member representing plant nurseries in the State;

(b) one member representing seed suppliers;

(c) one member with experience or expertise in public land management and open space preservation;

(d) one member with experience or expertise in highway engineering and roadside landscaping;

(e) one member of the academic community with expertise in native plants and native seeds; and

(f) one member representing an environmental education and conservation advocacy organization in the State.

c. All appointments to the commission shall be made no later than 90 days after the effective date of this act. Each member shall serve for the duration of the commission, and vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointments. The members of the commission shall serve without compensation, but shall be eligible for reimbursement for necessary and reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties within the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the commission for its purposes.

d. The commission shall organize as soon as practicable following the appointment of its public members and shall select a chairperson and a vice-chairperson from among its members, as well as a secretary who need not be a member of the commission. A majority of the membership of the commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of commission business. The commission may meet and hold hearings at the place or places the commission designates.

The Department of Agriculture shall provide staff support to the commission. The commission shall be entitled to call to its assistance and avail itself of the services of the employees of any State, county, or municipal department, board, bureau, commission, or agency as the commission may require and as may be available to the commission for its purposes.

e. No later than one year after its organization, the commission shall prepare and submit to the Governor and, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), the Legislature, a final report detailing the commission's plan to increase the production and use of native seeds in the State, including any recommendations for legislative or regulatory action that are necessary to effectuate the plan.

f. The commission shall expire 30 days after submission of its final report pursuant to subsection e. of this section.

g. As used in this section, "native seed" means a germinating seed, or other plant part used to propagate a plant, that originates from a plant species that is indigenous to New Jersey.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill would establish the New Jersey Native Seed Commission in the Department of Agriculture.

The purpose of the commission would be to develop a plan to: (1) increase the production of native seeds in the State; (2) increase the use of native seeds in public land management, roadside landscaping, reforestation, habitat restoration, and other projects as determined by the commission; and (3) ensure that native seeds are commercially available in the State at a reasonable cost and in adequate supply.

The commission would consist of 9 members, including the Secretary of Agriculture, the Commissioner of Environmental Protection, and the Commissioner of Transportation, each of whom would serve ex officio, or their respective designees, and other stakeholders and experts. The commission would be required to submit its plan to the Governor and the Legislature no later than one year after its organization.

The commission would expire 30 days after submission of its plan under the bill.