

1 AN ACT concerning conservation.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Legacy  
5 Tree Program Task Force Act.

6 Section 5. Findings; purpose.

7 (a) The General Assembly finds that:

8 (1) Trees are essential to ecological, cultural, and  
9 economic life on Earth.

10 (2) Trees support species diversity, food webs,  
11 habitats, and numerous ecological processes, such as water  
12 and air purification.

13 (3) Trees assist in regulating climate and soil  
14 fertility.

15 (4) The State must commit to preserving and  
16 celebrating our legacy and heritage trees and must develop  
17 pathways for the public to advocate for the preservation  
18 of trees in communities.

19 (b) The General Assembly intends this Act to help create a  
20 Statewide legacy tree program to promote the identification,  
21 awareness, commemoration, and preservation of significant  
22 trees within the State.

1 Section 10. Legacy Tree Program Task Force.

2 (a) The Legacy Tree Program Task Force is created, shall  
3 meet on a quarterly basis for 4 years after the effective date  
4 of this Act, and shall, by no later than June 30, 2028, submit  
5 to the General Assembly, in accordance with Section 3.1 of the  
6 General Assembly Organization Act, a report that contains the  
7 final recommendations developed under subsection (b).

8 (b) The Legacy Tree Program Task Force shall establish  
9 recommendations for the creation of a statewide legacy tree  
10 recognition program to promote the identification, awareness,  
11 commemoration, and preservation of significant trees in the  
12 State.

13 (c) The Task Force shall consist of the following members:

14 (1) one representative of an environmental  
15 organization, appointed by the Governor;

16 (2) one representative of the Morton Arboretum,  
17 appointed by the Governor;

18 (3) the director of the Illinois Environmental  
19 Protection Agency or a representative of their choosing;

20 (4) one representative of the Illinois Forestry  
21 Development Council, appointed by the Governor;

22 (5) one representative of the Shawnee National Forest,  
23 appointed by the Governor;

24 (6) one representative of the Southern Illinois  
25 University Department of Forestry, appointed by the  
26 Governor;

1           (7) one representative of the University of Illinois  
2 Extension forestry program, appointed by the Governor;

3           (8) one representative of an association that  
4 represents Illinois arborists, appointed by the Governor;

5           (9) two representatives of the Department of Natural  
6 Resources, appointed by the Governor;

7           (10) one representative of an environmental  
8 organization that is different than the organization in  
9 paragraph (1), appointed by the Governor;

10           (11) one representative of the Chicago Urban Forestry  
11 Board, appointed by the Governor;

12           (12) one representative of a forest preserve district  
13 in a county that is adjacent to Cook County, appointed by  
14 the Governor;

15           (13) one representative of a forest preserve district  
16 located south of Interstate 80, appointed by the Governor;

17           (14) one representative of a statewide organization  
18 representing park districts, appointed by the Governor;

19           (15) one member of the House of Representatives,  
20 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

21           (16) one member of the House of Representatives,  
22 appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of  
23 Representatives;

24           (17) one member of the Senate, appointed by the  
25 President of the Senate; and

26           (18) one member of the Senate, appointed by the

1 Minority Leader of the Senate.

2 (d) Members of the Task Force shall serve without  
3 compensation.

4 (e) The Department of Natural Resources shall provide  
5 staff and administrative support services to the Task Force  
6 and serve as the lead and chair agency of the Task Force.

7 Section 15. Responsibilities. The Task Force shall  
8 establish recommendations for the following:

9 (1) criteria for a definition of legacy tree and  
10 legacy tree standards that can be used on a variety of  
11 trees;

12 (2) criteria for which the historical and cultural  
13 significance of a tree could be measured;

14 (3) procedures for nominating trees on public and  
15 private property;

16 (4) exploring partnership opportunities with units of  
17 local government for oversight of the legacy tree program  
18 and participation in the program;

19 (5) creating a public awareness program, including  
20 digital media, a website, a legacy tree tool kit and  
21 educational materials to be made available by the  
22 Department of Natural Resources for use by units of local  
23 government;

24 (6) exploring funding sources for the operation and  
25 maintenance of the statewide legacy tree program,

1 including grant funding opportunities to facilitate  
2 participation in the program by units of local government;

3 (7) procedures for withdrawing trees from the program;

4 (8) procedures for legacy tree assessment;

5 (9) procedures for how a tree would be designated or  
6 honored physically;

7 (10) procedures for mapping trees on a searchable  
8 website; and

9 (11) procedures for delisting a healthy designated  
10 legacy tree.

11 Section 90. Repeal. This Act is repealed on June 30, 2034.