



Sen. Rachel Ventura

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1 AMENDMENT TO SENATE BILL 2357

2 AMENDMENT NO. \_\_\_\_\_. Amend Senate Bill 2357 by replacing  
3 everything after the enacting clause with the following:

4 "Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the  
5 Healthy Forests, Wetlands, and Prairies Act.

6 Section 5. Findings. The General Assembly finds it is in  
7 the interest of the State to encourage natural solutions as  
8 one component of the State's efforts to reduce and remediate  
9 the impacts of climate change. Natural solutions must include  
10 planting native trees and other vegetation demonstrated to  
11 reduce carbon dioxide. To accomplish this, the State must  
12 offer assistance to other units of local government that are  
13 taking steps to fight climate change by restoring forests,  
14 wetlands, prairies, and other landscapes native to Illinois  
15 and demonstrated to have a positive environmental impact.

1           Section 10. State goal. It is the goal of the State that  
2 there be no overall net loss of the State's existing forest,  
3 prairie, or wetland acres or their functional value due to  
4 State-supported activities. Further, the State and units of  
5 local government shall preserve, enhance, and create forests,  
6 prairies, and wetlands where practical in order to mitigate  
7 the impact of climate change and reduce carbon dioxide from  
8 the atmosphere.

9           Section 15. Receipt of federal moneys. The Department of  
10 Natural Resources may receive federal moneys to administer a  
11 Healthy Forests, Wetlands, and Prairies Grant Program.

12           Section 20. Establishment of the Healthy Forests,  
13 Wetlands, and Prairies Grant Program.

14           (a) The Department of Natural Resources, subject to  
15 appropriation, shall establish and administer a Healthy  
16 Forests, Wetlands, and Prairies Grant Program to restore  
17 degraded forest lands and native prairies, and to promote the  
18 growth of native vegetation that remove carbon dioxide from  
19 the atmosphere and help to mitigate the impact of climate  
20 change.

21           (b) Eligible entities for the Healthy Forests, Wetlands,  
22 and Prairies Grant Program include:

23                   (1) units of State and local government including, but  
24 not limited to, State agencies, municipalities, townships,

1 counties, forest preserves, and park districts;

2 (2) conservation land trusts;

3 (3) not-for-profit entities with conservation missions  
4 including, but not limited to, climate change mitigation,  
5 preservation of natural lands, and conservation of the  
6 State's natural resources; and

7 (4) other entities to be determined by the Department  
8 as eligible recipients of the grants under this Act.

9 (c) The Department may utilize an amount not to exceed 25%  
10 of the funds appropriated for the Healthy Forests, Wetlands,  
11 and Prairies Grant Program for administrative costs and for  
12 the purposes as described in subsection (e).

13 (d) The Department shall adopt any rules necessary for the  
14 implementation of this Act, including requirements and  
15 timeframes for the submittal of grant applications by eligible  
16 entities.

17 (e) Grants under this Act may be used by eligible entities  
18 for the purpose of:

19 (1) matching funds for federal or private dollars for  
20 projects that forward the goal of climate change  
21 mitigation through the promotion of the management,  
22 planting, maintaining and preserving of native grasses,  
23 plants, and trees;

24 (2) projects along roadways and in parks and forest  
25 preserves on public or private lands to plant native trees  
26 and prairie grasses demonstrated to absorb carbon;

1           (3) projects promoting the stewardship of existing  
2 public and private urban forests and natural lands,  
3 including the removal of invasive or non-native plant  
4 species;

5           (4) funding regional teams tasked with planting native  
6 prairie grasses and trees, prescribed burning for the  
7 maintenance of natural lands, removing invasive plant  
8 species, and educational outreach;

9           (5) education and marketing regarding local projects  
10 or steps community members may take to promote the growth  
11 of native vegetation that removes carbon dioxide from the  
12 atmosphere; and

13           (6) other projects to be determined by the Department  
14 as eligible projects under the grant program established  
15 under this Act.

16           Section 25. Healthy Forests, Wetlands, and Prairies Grant  
17 Fund. The Healthy Forests, Wetlands, and Prairies Grant Fund  
18 is created in the State treasury. The fund shall be  
19 administered by the Department of Natural Resources. The fund  
20 may receive moneys appropriated by the General Assembly or  
21 from the federal government, private donations, or any other  
22 legal source.

23           Section 90. The Department of Natural Resources Act is  
24 amended by changing Section 1-15 as follows:

1 (20 ILCS 801/1-15)

2 Sec. 1-15. General powers and duties.

3 (a) It shall be the duty of the Department to investigate  
4 practical problems, implement studies, conduct research and  
5 provide assistance, information and data relating to the  
6 technology and administration of the natural history,  
7 entomology, zoology, and botany of this State; the geology and  
8 natural resources of this State; the water and atmospheric  
9 resources of this State; and the archeological and cultural  
10 history of this State.

11 (b) The Department (i) shall obtain, store, and process  
12 relevant data; recommend technological, administrative, and  
13 legislative changes and developments; cooperate with other  
14 federal, state, and local governmental research agencies,  
15 facilities, or institutes in the selection of projects for  
16 study; cooperate with the Board of Higher Education and with  
17 the public and private colleges and universities in this State  
18 in developing relevant interdisciplinary approaches to  
19 problems; and evaluate curricula at all levels of education  
20 and provide assistance to instructors and (ii) may sponsor an  
21 annual conference of leaders in government, industry, health,  
22 and education to evaluate the state of this State's  
23 environment and natural resources.

24 (c) The Director, in accordance with the Personnel Code,  
25 shall employ such personnel, provide such facilities, and

1 contract for such outside services as may be necessary to  
2 carry out the purposes of the Department. Maximum use shall be  
3 made of existing federal and state agencies, facilities, and  
4 personnel in conducting research under this Act.

5 (c-5) The Department may use the services of, and enter  
6 into necessary agreements with, outside entities for the  
7 purpose of evaluating grant applications and for the purpose  
8 of administering or monitoring compliance with grant  
9 agreements. Contracts under this subsection shall not exceed 5  
10 2 years, without an executed extension in length.

11 (d) In addition to its other powers, the Department has  
12 the following powers:

13 (1) To obtain, store, process, and provide data and  
14 information related to the powers and duties of the  
15 Department under this Act. This subdivision (d)(1) does  
16 ~~not~~ give authority to the Department to require reports  
17 from nongovernmental sources or entities.

18 (2) To cooperate with and support the Illinois Science  
19 and Technology Advisory Committee and the Illinois  
20 Coalition for the purpose of facilitating the effective  
21 operations and activities of such entities. Support may  
22 include, but need not be limited to, providing space for  
23 the operations of the Committee and the Illinois  
24 Coalition.

25 (e) The Department is authorized to make grants to local  
26 not-for-profit organizations for the purposes of development,

1 management, maintenance, and study of wetland areas, forests,  
2 prairies, and other landscapes demonstrated to reduce the  
3 impact of climate change.

4 (f) The Department has the authority to accept, receive  
5 and administer on behalf of the State any gifts, bequests,  
6 donations, income from property rental and endowments. Any  
7 such funds received by the Department shall be deposited into  
8 the Natural Resources Fund, a special fund which is hereby  
9 created in the State treasury, and used for the purposes of  
10 this Act or, when appropriate, for such purposes and under  
11 such restrictions, terms and conditions as are predetermined  
12 by the donor or grantor of such funds or property. Any accrued  
13 interest from money deposited into the Natural Resources Fund  
14 shall be reinvested into the Fund and used in the same manner  
15 as the principal. The Director shall maintain records which  
16 account for and assure that restricted funds or property are  
17 disbursed or used pursuant to the restrictions, terms or  
18 conditions of the donor.

19 (g) The Department shall recognize, preserve, and promote  
20 our special heritage of recreational hunting and trapping by  
21 providing opportunities to hunt and trap in accordance with  
22 the Wildlife Code.

23 (h) Within 5 years after the effective date of this  
24 amendatory Act of the 102nd General Assembly, the Department  
25 shall fly a United States Flag, an Illinois flag, and a POW/MIA  
26 flag at all State parks. Donations may be made by groups and

1 individuals to the Department's Special Projects Fund for  
2 costs related to the implementation of this subsection.

3 (Source: P.A. 102-388, eff. 1-1-22; 102-699, eff. 4-19-22.)

4 Section 95. The State Finance Act is amended by adding  
5 Section 5.990 as follows:

6 (30 ILCS 105/5.990 new)

7 Sec. 5.990. The Healthy Forests, Wetlands, and Prairies  
8 Grant Fund."