

No. 1991-33

AN ACT

HB 1344

Relating to agriculture and rural youth; creating an Agriculture and Rural Youth Organization Grant Program; imposing duties on the Department of Agriculture; and providing for funding.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. Short title.

This act shall be known and may be cited as the Agriculture and Rural Youth Development Act.

Section 2. Definitions.

The following words and phrases when used in this act shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

“Agriculture and rural youth organization.” Any organization composed mainly of youth and organized to promote development in the areas of agriculture, rural community leadership, vocational training and peer fellowship. The term includes, but is not limited to, Pennsylvania FFA, 4-H, Ag in the classroom, Future Homemakers of America and vocational education programs.

“Board.” The State Agriculture and Rural Youth Development Board.

“Department.” The Department of Agriculture of the Commonwealth.

“Program.” The Agriculture and Rural Youth Organization Grant Program.

Section 3. Board membership.

The board shall consist of the following members:

(1) The Secretary of Agriculture or his designee, who shall serve as chairperson.

(2) The Secretary of Education or his designee.

(3) One representative from the Pennsylvania Agriculture Teachers Association and one from the Penn State Cooperative Extension, both of whom shall be appointed by the Governor.

(4) The Statewide president of the Pennsylvania FFA.

(5) A youth representative of the Pennsylvania 4-H.

(6) Up to three representatives, each from a different Pennsylvania farm or rural organization having a youth program, shall be appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture.

(7) The chairman and the minority chairman of the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee of the Senate or their designee and the majority chairman and the minority chairman of the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives or their designee.

Section 4. Authorization and purpose.

(a) Grant program.—The department, in consultation with the board, shall establish a program of grants to agriculture and rural youth organizations qualifying to receive grants under this act.

(b) Purpose.—Grants awarded under the provisions of this act may be used for any of the following purposes:

(1) To cover the costs of special projects conducted by the organization and approved by the board.

(2) For educational programs conducted by the organization and approved by the board.

(3) For educational seminars and field trips conducted by the organization and approved by the board.

(4) For agricultural safety training programs conducted by the organization and approved by the board.

(5) For certain capital projects and equipment purchases approved by the board.

(c) Guidelines.—The department, in consultation with the board, shall establish guidelines to award grants for the purposes set forth in subsection (b) and other purposes deemed appropriate by the department with the approval of the board.

Section 5. Applications.

(a) Application procedure.—An agriculture and rural youth organization may make application at the time, in the manner and containing any information as the department may require. The department shall determine from the information provided whether the application is eligible for consideration by the board.

(b) Annual meeting.—The board shall meet annually to recommend to the Department the awarding of grants to qualifying organizations.

(c) Other meetings.—The board shall meet at the call of the chairperson to conduct business related to the award of grants.

Section 6. Grants.

(a) General rule.—The department shall make grants in an amount not to exceed \$2,500 to qualifying agriculture and rural youth organizations upon the recommendation of the board.

(b) Matching funds.—Grants in an amount not to exceed \$15,000 shall be awarded to qualifying agriculture and rural youth organizations selected to receive these awards for the purposes of capital projects. Grants for capital projects must be matched by private funds in an amount equal to the State grant.

(c) Annual allocation.—The first annual allocation of grants to qualifying organizations shall not exceed \$150,000. The board shall establish annual allocation limits for each subsequent year.

Section 7. Regulations.

The department is charged with administering the provisions of this act and is authorized, with the approval of the board, to prescribe and adopt program policy guidelines or regulations relating to the administration and enforcement of this act.

Section 8. Funding.

The department shall use as much moneys as are necessary and available from the Rural Rehabilitation Corporation assets for the implementation of the provisions of this act.

Section 9. Expiration.

The provisions of this act shall terminate when the Rural Rehabilitation Corporation assets have been depleted.

Section 10. Effective date.

This act shall take effect immediately.

APPROVED—The 6th day of August, A. D. 1991.

ROBERT P. CASEY