

No. 2006-110

AN ACT

SB 1224

Amending the act of May 15, 1945 (P.L.547, No.217), entitled, as amended, "An act relating to the conservation of soil, water and related natural resources and land use practices contributing to soil wastage and soil erosion; providing for the organization of the various counties into conservation districts; the appointment of their officers and employees; and prescribing their powers and duties; creating the State Conservation Commission in the Department of Environmental Resources and fixing its powers and duties relative to the administration of this act; providing financial and legal assistance to such conservation districts and the commission; and authorizing county governing bodies to make appropriations thereto; providing for disposition and operation of existing districts; and repealing existing laws," further providing for Commonwealth appropriations.

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

Section 1. Section 14 of the act of May 15, 1945 (P.L.547, No.217), known as the Conservation District Law, reenacted and amended December 19, 1984 (P.L.1125, No.221), is amended to read:

Section 14. [**Commonwealth Appropriations.**—] *Funding.*—(a) The General Assembly of the Commonwealth shall appropriate from time to time as may be necessary, moneys out of the General Fund [**to the State Conservation Commission for its use in administering**] *to administer* the provisions of this act.

(b) There is created a special fund in the State Treasury to be known as the Conservation District Fund. State funds appropriated for assistance to local conservation districts shall be deposited in the fund. All money in the fund and the interest it accrues are appropriated to the commission for allocation to the conservation districts for activities necessary to meet the requirements of this act.

(c) The fund may be supplemented by moneys received from the following sources:

(1) State funds appropriated to conservation districts or the commission.

(2) Federal funds appropriated to conservation districts, the commission or other agencies of the Commonwealth.

(3) Programs delegated to or contracted to conservation districts by any agency of the Commonwealth.

(4) Proceeds from the sale of any bonds made available to the commission.

(5) Gifts and other contributions from public and private sources.

(6) Any fees collected by the commission.

(d) The commission shall have the duty and authority to do all of the following:

(1) Adopt criteria and procedures for the allocation of moneys in the fund.

(2) Create accounts within the fund for the purposes of providing funding for the programs authorized by this act.

(3) Provide for provisions to make advance payments and reimbursements to conservation districts for approved purposes.

(4) Make payments to conservation districts or any agency designated by the commission in accordance with the requirements of the agency from which the funds originated.

(e) Funds allocated to conservation districts shall be used for costs associated with implementing programs delegated or contracted by the Commonwealth, environmental education, programs to protect the environment approved by the commission or for activities necessary to meet the requirements of this act.

(f) For the purposes of this section, a conservation district shall be exempt from State contracting guidelines and eligible for advance funding.

(g) The fund shall not be subject to 42 Pa.C.S. Ch. 37 Subch. C (relating to judicial computer system).

(h) The money in the fund shall only be used for the purposes authorized by this act and shall not be transferred or diverted to any other purpose.

Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.

APPROVED—The 7th day of July, A.D. 2006.

EDWARD G. RENDELL