

CONFIDENTIAL
LEGISLATIVE BILL REVIEW FORM: 2015

Bill Number: H.484 Name of Bill: A bill to amend multiple provisions of law administered by the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets

Agency/ Dept: FPR Author of Bill Review: Meghan Purvee

Date of Bill Review: 3/23/15 Related Bills and Key Players: _____

Status of Bill: (check one): ☒ Upon Introduction _____ As passed by 1st body _____ As passed by both

Recommended Position:

☒ Support _____ Oppose _____ Remain Neutral _____ Support with modifications identified in #8 below

Analysis of Bill

1. Summary of bill and issue it addresses. *Describe what the bill is intended to accomplish and why.*

This bill proposes to amend multiple provisions administered by the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, including proposed amendments to the Working Lands Enterprise Program, which is of interest to FPR. This bill proposes to eliminate the Vermont Agricultural and Forest Products Development Board and transfer its duties to the Working Lands Enterprise Board and add new members to the Working Lands Enterprise Board from agricultural and forestry industry sectors that were represented on the Vermont Agricultural and Forest Products Development board, essentially consolidating the two Boards into a single Board.

Thus, the powers and duties of the Working Lands Enterprise Board have been expanded as follows: the duties are specifically set forth to include: optimizing the agriculture and forestry use of Vermont lands, expanding existing markets and developing new markets, and identifying opportunities and challenges related to access to capital, infrastructure, product development, marketing, training, research and education. The powers of the Board are expanded beyond establishing an application process and eligibility criteria for awarding grants to include designing an ongoing public engagement process, obtaining information from experts in the fields, state economists and agencies and other planning entities, and to make recommendations to the Administration and General Assembly on ways to improve laws and policies related to the agricultural economic development plan. The Board may also develop an annual budget, solicit and accept grants, gifts or appropriations and expend monies to fulfill the purposes of the law.

6 V.S.A. §2966 which establishes the Vermont Agricultural and Forest Products Development Board and its duties is proposed to be repealed.

- 2. Is there a need for this bill?** *Please explain why or why not.* Yes, this bill establishes one Board to address all issues related to supporting and promoting the agricultural and forest products industry, rather than having two separate entities, resulting in a more efficient process and cost savings.
- 3. What are likely to be the fiscal and programmatic implications of this bill for this Department?**

Please return this bill review as a Microsoft Word document to laura.gray@state.vt.us and jessica.mishaan@state.vt.us

The Commissioner of FPR is a designated member of the Working Lands Enterprise Board and as currently enacted, an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Vermont Agricultural and Forest Products Board. Consolidating the responsibilities of the two Boards into a single Board creates efficiency and savings for FPR and the other state and private sector entities participating as members on the Board. This also eliminates the need for communication and interaction between two different Boards that are charged with addressing similar issues related to agriculture and forest products industries.

4. What might be the fiscal and programmatic implications of this bill for other departments in state government, and what is likely to be their perspective on it?
5. What might be the fiscal and programmatic implications of this bill for others, and what is likely to be their perspective on it? (for example, public, municipalities, organizations, business, regulated entities, etc)
6. Other Stakeholders:
 - 6.1 Who else is likely to support the proposal and why? Agriculture and Forestry industry, Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets.
 - 6.2 Who else is likely to oppose the proposal and why?
7. Rationale for recommendation: *Justify recommendation stated above.*
8. Specific modifications that would be needed to recommend support of this bill: *Not meant to rewrite bill, but rather, an opportunity to identify simple modifications that would change recommended position.*
9. Gubernatorial appointments to board or commission?

Commissioner has reviewed this document:  Date: 3/30/15

Secretary has reviewed this document:  Date: 3-31-15