

1 AN ACT concerning State government.

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
5 Agriculture Equity Commission Act.

6 Section 5. Agriculture Equity Commission.

7 (a) There is hereby established the Agriculture Equity
8 Commission to ensure equity in the State's top job producing
9 industry by recognizing the loss to African American farmers
10 and growers and the difficulties other minorities have faced
11 in the agriculture industry and the effect those difficulties
12 have on the food system, health, and economy of vulnerable
13 communities.

14 (b) To the extent practicable, the Commission shall
15 reflect representation of socially disadvantaged communities,
16 businesses, and farmers, and include academics, policy
17 experts, and legislators who are experienced in agriculture
18 and related matters.

19 (c) The Commission shall consist of the following members:

20 (1) eight members appointed one each by the Governor,
21 Speaker of the House of Representatives, Minority Leader
22 of the House of Representatives, President of the Senate,
23 Minority Leader of the Senate, the House of

1 Representatives Agriculture Chair, the Black Caucus Joint
2 Chair, and the Latino Caucus Chair;

3 (2) one member of the Latino Caucus;

4 (3) one member of the Black Caucus;

5 (4) the Director of Agriculture, or his or her
6 designee;

7 (5) the Director of Public Health, or his or her
8 designee;

9 (6) a representative of an agribusiness or small
10 farmer private enterprise, appointed by the Governor;

11 (7) two representatives of nonprofit community based
12 organizations located in a disproportionately impacted
13 area or food desert whose primary mission is helping
14 minorities in the agriculture field and increasing healthy
15 food access, appointed by the Governor;

16 (8) one representative of a nonprofit statewide
17 organization dedicated to policy to improve the conditions
18 for socially disadvantaged farmers, appointed by the
19 Governor;

20 (9) one representative of a nonprofit organization
21 whose primary mission is environmental justice and
22 increasing healthy food access for minority populations,
23 appointed by the Governor;

24 (10) six socially disadvantaged farmers or
25 agribusiness owners from various areas of the State,
26 including minority-owned businesses, women-owned

1 businesses, and businesses owned by persons with a
2 disability, appointed by the Governor;

3 (11) one person with a background and work experience
4 in journalism, public relations community outreach, and
5 agriculture, appointed by the Governor;

6 (12) one representative of a nonprofit organization
7 that trains new farmers through apprenticeship programs
8 and increases healthy food access, appointed by the
9 Governor;

10 (13) one attorney or legal expert in property law,
11 appointed by the Governor;

12 (14) one representative of a Fortune 500 agribusiness
13 or a business with a significant presence in agriculture
14 that is headquartered or has offices in the State of
15 Illinois, appointed by the Governor;

16 (15) one representative of an organization dedicated
17 to economic and business development for minorities; and

18 (16) one agriculture teacher or instructor, or a
19 person from an organization dedicated to agricultural
20 education for minorities and underserved communities,
21 appointed by the Governor.

22 (d) Members of the Commission shall serve without
23 compensation for the duration of the Commission.

24 (e) In the event of a vacancy, the vacancy shall be filled
25 in the same manner as the original appointment or as otherwise
26 provided under this Section.

1 (f) The Commission shall convene within 60 days after the
2 effective date of this Act. At the initial meeting of the
3 Commission, the Commission shall elect a chair from among its
4 members. The Commission shall meet on a quarterly basis, or
5 more often if necessary.

6 (g) The Department of Agriculture shall provide
7 administrative and other support to the Commission.

8 Section 10. Duties of the Commission. The Agriculture
9 Equity Commission shall have the following duties:

10 (1) To study and provide recommendations concerning
11 equity for and participation of socially disadvantaged
12 farmers and growers in the agriculture sector in Illinois.

13 (2) To study and provide recommendations concerning
14 all forms of agriculture, including, but not limited to,
15 corn and soy, small farms, specialty crops, livestock,
16 urban farming, indoor farming, cannabis, and hemp.

17 (3) To provide recommendations for policies and
18 programs in several main areas in which the Commission can
19 address through workgroups, including, but not limited to,
20 the following: (i) access to secure land tenure; (ii)
21 access to capital and financial planning; (iii) access to
22 education and training; (iv) access to resources,
23 infrastructure, and business planning; and (v) market
24 access and diversification.

25 (4) To help guide plans and policies in Illinois

1 agriculture industries, including, but not limited to, the
2 following: (i) increasing outreach to socially
3 disadvantaged farmers and growers; (ii) working with the
4 Department of Agriculture to analyze and propose
5 legislative policy solutions and on the ground projects;
6 and (iii) reviewing disparity studies and suggesting new
7 areas of study or data collection.

8 (5) To develop an annual plan of education events,
9 meetings, and trainings for all sectors of socially
10 disadvantaged farmers and growers.

11 Section 15. Report. The Agriculture Equity Commission
12 shall annually report to the Governor and the General Assembly
13 on its findings, recommendations, and other relevant matters
14 concerning and based upon its duties as prescribed under
15 Section 10.