

House Bill 976

By: Representatives Schofield of the 60th, Jackson of the 128th, Scott of the 76th, Buckner of the 137th, Bentley of the 139th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Title 2 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to agriculture, so as to
2 establish the Black Farmer Restoration Office; to provide definitions; to establish and
3 provide requirements for the Farm Conservation Corps; to provide for related matters; to
4 repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

6 **SECTION 1.**

7 Title 2 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to agriculture, is amended by
8 adding a new chapter to read as follows:

9 "CHAPTER 24

10 2-24-1.

11 As used in this chapter, the term:

12 (1) 'Eligible person' means a natural person who is a resident of Georgia, is at least 21
13 years of age, has previously identified as Black or African American, and has at least one
14 parent of African ancestry.

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15 (2) 'Socially disadvantaged farmer' means a farmer who is a member of a socially
16 disadvantaged group.

17 (3) 'Socially disadvantaged group' means a group of people whose members have been
18 subject to racial or ethnic prejudice because of their identity as a member of a group
19 without regard to their individual qualities.

20 (4) 'Training' means a program of training approved by the Commissioner that provides
21 an eligible person with the basic skills to operate a farm profitably with a primary focus
22 on regenerating the soil, ecosystem, and local community; provides a course of study that
23 is equivalent to no less than 30 academic credit hours of study, which may be provided
24 as direct in-field instruction; focuses on low capital-intensive techniques and
25 technologies; and studies local and regional food systems and the market opportunities
26 those systems present.

27 2-24-2.

28 There is hereby created the Black Farmer Restoration Office within the department to
29 support current Black farmers and to encourage the growth of Black farmers into the field
30 of agriculture. The Black Farmer Restoration Office shall administer the provisions of this
31 chapter.

32 2-24-3.

33 (a) There is established the Farm Conservation Corps to be administered by the department
34 through the Black Farmer Restoration Office to provide residents between the ages of 18
35 and 29 from socially disadvantaged groups the academic, vocational, and social skills
36 necessary to pursue long-term and productive careers in agriculture.

37 (b) The members of the Farm Conservation Corps shall serve as on-farm apprentices, at
38 no cost, to farms with an annual gross farm income of less than \$250,000.00 operated by:

