

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 31, 2011

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2011–12 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 691

Introduced by Assembly Member Perea

February 17, 2011

~~An act relating to agricultural land conservation. An act to add Article 10 (commencing with Section 590) to Chapter 3 of Part 1 of Division 1 of the Food and Agricultural Code, relating to permitting.~~

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 691, as amended, Perea. ~~Agricultural land: one-stop permit assistance pilot program. Department of Food and Agriculture: ombudsman.~~

Existing law requires the Department of Food and Agriculture to regulate various laws regulating agriculture and farmland in the state. Existing law provides that the department is under the control of a civil executive officer known as the Secretary of Food and Agriculture and authorizes the department to provide for the issuance and renewal on a two-year basis of licenses, certificates of registration, or other indicia of authority issued by the department or any agency in the department.

~~This bill would declare the intent of the Legislature to enact subsequent legislation that would require the Department of Food and Agriculture to establish a one-stop permit assistance pilot program that would allow farmers and agribusiness owners to obtain all necessary city, county, and state regulatory permits in one location. The bill would further declare the intent of the Legislature that the pilot program should institute a process for the department to coordinate the work of state and local government officials and agency representatives at various levels of government to facilitate the automation and streamlining of~~

regulatory permitting processes in the state and to provide information to the public on the appropriate state agency information Web sites, and the Governor’s Office of Economic Development Web site.

This bill would designate the secretary as the ombudsman for the department and would require the ombudsman to provide assistance in understanding the process for obtaining permits, assistance in the expeditious completion of the process for obtaining permits, and agriculture related information and education to assist policy development regarding agricultural issues. The bill would make the ombudsman responsible for reviewing and identifying duplicative agriculture regulations that exist within the state and other government agencies, and to conduct a cumulative impact report prior to any new agriculture regulation. The bill would authorize the ombudsman to initiate the review of duplicative regulations by the Office of Administrative Law, as provided.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: ~~no~~-yes. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 *SECTION 1. Article 10 (commencing with Section 590) is*
2 *added to Chapter 3 of Part 1 of Division 1 of the Food and*
3 *Agricultural Code, to read:*

4
5 *Article 10. Ombudsman*

6
7 *590. (a) The secretary is hereby designated as the ombudsman*
8 *for the Department of Food and Agriculture. The ombudsman shall*
9 *provide all of the following:*

10 *(1) Assistance in understanding the process for obtaining*
11 *permits required by the department, and in resolving concerns*
12 *with that process.*

13 *(2) Appropriate direction and assistance in the expeditious*
14 *completion of the process for obtaining permits required by the*
15 *department.*

16 *(3) Agriculture-related information and education to assist*
17 *policy development regarding agricultural issues.*

18 *(b) The ombudsman shall be responsible for the following:*
19 *(1) Reviewing and identifying duplicative agricultural*
20 *regulations that exist within the state and other government*

1 agencies. The ombudsman may initiate review of a duplicative
2 regulations by the Office of Administrative Law pursuant to the
3 process specified in Article 7 (commencing with Section 11349.7)
4 of Chapter 3.5 of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government
5 Code.

6 (2) Conducting a cumulative impact report prior to the
7 enactment of any new agricultural regulation.

8 ~~SECTION 1. It is the intent of the Legislature to enact~~
9 ~~subsequent legislation that would require the Department of Food~~
10 ~~and Agriculture to establish a one-stop permit assistance pilot~~
11 ~~program to allow farmers and agribusiness owners to obtain all~~
12 ~~necessary city, county, and state regulatory permits in one location.~~
13 ~~It is further the intent of the Legislature that the pilot program~~
14 ~~should institute a process for the department to coordinate the work~~
15 ~~of state and local government officials and agency representatives~~
16 ~~at various levels of government to facilitate the automation and~~
17 ~~streamlining of regulatory permit processes in the state and to~~
18 ~~provide information to the public on state agency Web sites and~~
19 ~~the Governor's Office of Economic Development Web site.~~