



General Assembly

January Session, 2001

**Raised Bill No. 6737**

LCO No. 3784

Referred to Committee on Planning and Development

Introduced by:

(PD)

**AN ACT PROVIDING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO GRAPE GROWERS.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (a) As used in this section, "development rights"  
2 means the rights of the fee simple owner of agricultural land to  
3 develop, construct on, sell, lease or otherwise improve the agricultural  
4 land for uses that result in rendering such land no longer agricultural  
5 land, but shall not be construed to include: (1) The uses defined in  
6 subsection (q) of section 1-1 of the general statutes, (2) the rights of the  
7 fee owner of agricultural land to develop, construct on, sell the  
8 property in its entirety, lease or otherwise improve the agricultural  
9 land to preserve, maintain, operate or continue such land as  
10 agricultural land, including, but not limited to, construction thereon of  
11 residences for persons directly incidental to farm operation and  
12 buildings for animals, roadside stands and farm markets for sale to the  
13 consumer of food products and ornamental plants, facilities for the  
14 storing of equipment and products or processing thereof or such other  
15 improvements, activities and uses thereon as may be directly or  
16 incidentally related to the operation of the agricultural enterprise, as

17 long as the acreage and productivity of arable land for crops is not  
18 materially decreased and due consideration is given to the impact of  
19 any decrease in acreage or productivity of such arable land upon the  
20 total farm operation, except that new construction or modification of  
21 an existing farm building necessary to the operation of a farm on  
22 prime farmland, as defined by the United States Department of  
23 Agriculture, of which the state has purchased development rights shall  
24 be limited to not more than five per cent of the total of such prime  
25 farmland, (3) the rights of the fee owner to provide for the extraction of  
26 gravel or like natural elements for purposes directly or incidentally  
27 related to the operation of the agricultural enterprise, or (4) the existing  
28 water and mineral rights, exclusive of gravel, of the fee owner.

29 (b) There is established an account to be known as the "grape  
30 growers revolving loan account". The account shall contain any  
31 moneys required by law to be deposited in the account. Any balance  
32 remaining in the account at the end of any fiscal year shall be carried  
33 forward in the account for the fiscal year next succeeding. The account  
34 shall be used to make loans pursuant to subsection (b) of this section  
35 and to pay reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in  
36 administering loans under this section.

37 (c) The account shall be administered and used by the  
38 Commissioner of Agriculture for interest-free loans to grape growers  
39 for costs in creating, establishing or expanding vineyards and wineries  
40 consisting of land where not less than ten acres are set aside for any  
41 vineyard or winery operation. Loans shall be made for reimbursement  
42 for expenses in planting of grapes and construction and operation of  
43 buildings involved in the production and distribution of wine.

44 (d) No loan made pursuant to subsection (c) of this section shall be  
45 made unless the borrower agrees to convey to the state the  
46 development rights to the property for a term of twenty-five years  
47 after the date of the loan.

48 (e) Loans shall be for a term of fifteen years. No payment shall be

49 due for the initial five years of the loan except that in the case of a loan  
50 for construction or renovation of a building, no payment shall be due  
51 for the initial three years of the loan. The commissioner shall assess a  
52 penalty of five per cent of the amount of any monthly payment for any  
53 such payment which remains unpaid fifteen days after the due date of  
54 such payment and may assess such interest on such late payments as  
55 specified in a loan agreement.

56 (f) The commissioner shall adopt such regulations, in accordance  
57 with the provisions of chapter 54 of the general statutes, as may be  
58 necessary to administer the loan program established pursuant to this  
59 section.

60 Sec. 2. The sum of two million dollars is appropriated to the  
61 Department of Agriculture, from the General Fund, for the fiscal year  
62 ending June 30, 2002, for deposit in the grape growers revolving loan  
63 account established pursuant to section 1 of this act for loans under  
64 said section 1.

65 Sec. 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2001.

***Statement of Purpose:***

To establish a revolving loan program for grape growers.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*