

SENATE BILL 939

M4

11r2716

By: **Senator Manno**

Introduced and read first time: February 28, 2011

Assigned to: Rules

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Commission on Organic and Locally Grown Agricultural Products**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing a Commission on Organic and Locally Grown
4 Agricultural Products; specifying the membership, chairs, staff, and duties of
5 the Commission; specifying that a member of the Commission may not receive
6 compensation, but is entitled to a certain reimbursement; requiring the
7 Commission to analyze, study, and make recommendations regarding certain
8 matters; requiring the Commission to report to the Governor and the General
9 Assembly on or before a certain date; providing for the termination of this Act;
10 and generally relating to the Commission on Organic and Locally Grown
11 Agricultural Products.

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
13 MARYLAND, That:

14 (a) There is a Commission on Organic and Locally Grown Agricultural
15 Products.

16 (b) The Commission consists of the following members:

17 (1) one member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President
18 of the Senate;

19 (2) one member of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of
20 the House;

21 (3) the Secretary of Agriculture, or the Secretary's designee;

22 (4) the Secretary of Business and Economic Development, or the
23 Secretary's designee;

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (5) the Executive Director of the Maryland Agricultural and
2 Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation;

3 (6) the Executive Director of the Rural Maryland Council;

4 (7) the Director of the Maryland Cooperative Extension;

5 (8) a member of the Maryland Chamber of Commerce; and

6 (9) the following members, appointed by the Governor:

7 (i) two farmers practicing organic agriculture in the State;

8 (ii) one representative of an agricultural nonprofit organization
9 focused on the development of organic agriculture;

10 (iii) two representatives from commercial lending institutions
11 serving rural regions in the State, one of whom shall represent a major farm credit
12 organization operating in the State;

13 (iv) one representative of farm and food products distributors
14 operating in the State;

15 (v) one representative of food processors operating in the State;

16 (vi) one representative of food retailers operating in the State;

17 (vii) one representative of food service industries operating in the
18 State;

19 (viii) one representative of restaurants operating in the State;

20 (ix) one individual with knowledge and experience in the area of
21 agricultural products marketing; and

22 (x) one individual with knowledge and experience in the area of
23 public finance.

24 (c) The members appointed by the presiding officers of the General Assembly
25 shall cochair the Commission.

26 (d) The Department of Agriculture and the Department of Business and
27 Economic Development jointly shall provide staff for the Commission.

28 (e) A member of the Commission:

29 (1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Commission; but

1 (2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard
2 State Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

3 (f) The Commission shall:

4 (1) analyze the economic benefits that expanded development of the
5 organic and locally grown agricultural products sectors and increased trade in organic
6 and locally grown agricultural products would bring to the State;

7 (2) study strategies to promote organic and locally grown agricultural
8 products within the State and throughout the East Coast region, including:

9 (i) the identification and evaluation of sources of capital for
10 organic and locally grown agricultural products businesses;

11 (ii) the development of improved infrastructure for the organic
12 and locally grown agricultural products sectors, including efficient and competitive
13 transportation and distribution systems;

14 (iii) the development of marketing programs to increase demand
15 for and spending on organic and locally grown agricultural products;

16 (iv) the identification and conveyance of technical and
17 educational assistance, including business and risk management planning, best
18 management practices, workforce training, and marketing for organic and locally
19 grown agricultural production;

20 (v) the coordination of federal, State, and local resources to
21 attract private sector investment and create jobs in the organic and locally grown
22 agricultural products sectors; and

23 (vi) the encouragement of public-private partnerships; and

24 (3) make recommendations, including legislative and policy proposals,
25 regarding ways the State can promote the development, sale, and use of organic and
26 locally grown agricultural products.

27 (g) On or before December 31, 2011, the Commission shall report its findings
28 and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State
29 Government Article, the General Assembly.

30 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
31 June 1, 2011. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and, at the end of May 31,
32 2012, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be
33 abrogated and of no further force and effect.