

House File 2167 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE 2167
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A BILL FOR

- 1 An Act providing for a buffer strip program and fund, and making
- 2 appropriations.
- 3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

unofficial

1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. **466B.31 Definitions.**

2 1. "Buffer strip" means permanent vegetation that is
3 established and managed adjacent to a waterway to reduce
4 soil erosion and sediment loss, manage nutrients and reduce
5 contributing contaminant loads to receiving surface waters, and
6 improve surface water quality.

7 2. "Division" means the division of soil conservation and
8 water quality created within the department of agriculture and
9 land stewardship pursuant to section 159.5.

10 3. "Waterway" means a river, stream, creek, brook, drainage
11 ditch, or other perennially flowing body of water.

12 Sec. 2. NEW SECTION. **466B.32 Rulemaking.**

13 The division shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 17A as it
14 determines necessary or desirable to administer this subchapter.

15 Sec. 3. NEW SECTION. **466B.33 Buffer strip program.**

16 1. The division shall establish and administer a buffer strip
17 program on a statewide basis.

18 2. In administering the program, the division shall enter
19 into agreements with landowners to establish and maintain buffer
20 strips on land enrolled in the program according to criteria
21 established by the division. The criteria may include but is not
22 limited to any of the following:

23 a. The size of the enrolled land.

24 b. The period in which the buffer strip is required to be
25 maintained.

26 c. The current use of the enrolled land.

27 d. The extent to which a landowner incorporates complementary
28 soil and water conservation practices on the enrolled land.

29 e. The extent to which the landowner advertises the
30 landowner's participation in the program.

31 3. The department shall design a sign for display by
32 landowners participating in the program. The sign, when posted
33 on the landowner's land, shall clearly notify the traveling
34 public that the landowner's land is enrolled in the program for
35 purposes of restoring and enhancing water quality.

1 4. The program shall be financed on a cost-share basis
2 in which the division and the landowner contribute to the
3 establishment of the buffer strip. The amount contributed by the
4 division may account for the reduction of income incurred by a
5 landowner in the year that the land was enrolled.

6 5. The division may administer the program in conjunction
7 with the in-field infrastructure program created in section
8 466B.43.

9 Sec. 4. NEW SECTION. **466B.34 Buffer strip program fund.**

10 1. A buffer strip program fund is created in the state
11 treasury under the management and control of the division.

12 2. The fund shall consist of moneys appropriated to or
13 deposited in the fund. The fund may include other moneys
14 available to and obtained or accepted by the division, including
15 moneys from public or private sources.

16 3. Moneys in the fund are appropriated to the division and
17 shall be used exclusively to carry out the provisions of this
18 subchapter as determined by the division, and shall not require
19 further special authorization by the general assembly.

20 4. a. Notwithstanding section 12C.7, subsection 2, interest
21 or earnings on moneys in the fund shall be credited to the fund.

22 b. Notwithstanding section 8.33, moneys in the fund that
23 remain unencumbered or unobligated at the close of a fiscal year
24 shall not revert but shall remain available for expenditure for
25 the purposes designated.

26 Sec. 5. NEW SECTION. **466B.35 Appropriation.**

27 For the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026, and ending
28 June 30, 2027, and for each fiscal year thereafter, there is
29 appropriated from the general fund of the state to the department
30 of agriculture and land stewardship for deposit in the buffer
31 strip program fund the amount of five million dollars.

32 Sec. 6. Section 466B.43, subsection 4, Code 2026, is amended
33 to read as follows:

34 4. a. An in-field infrastructure program is created.
35 The program shall support projects located on agricultural

1 land, which may include demonstration projects, that decrease
2 erosion and precipitation-induced surface runoff, increase water
3 infiltration rates, and increase soil sustainability. The
4 program's projects shall be limited to infrastructure designed
5 and installed for use over multiple years, including but
6 not limited to structures, terraces, and waterways located on
7 cropland or pastureland, and including but not limited to soil
8 conservation or erosion control structures or managed drainage
9 systems. The program shall be financed on a cost-share basis.
10 b. The division may administer the program in conjunction
11 with the buffer strip program provided in subchapter III.

12 EXPLANATION

13 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
14 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

15 GENERAL. This bill amends Code chapter 466B, the "Surface
16 Water Protection and Flood Mitigation Act" (Code section 466B.1),
17 which establishes a number of programs to assess and reduce
18 sources of contaminants in surface water sources.

19 BILL'S PROVISIONS — BUFFER STRIP PROGRAM. The bill
20 establishes a buffer strip program (program) administered by
21 the division of soil conservation and water quality of the
22 department of agriculture and land stewardship (division). The
23 bill authorizes the division to enter into agreements with
24 participating landowners on a cost-share basis in which land is
25 enrolled for purposes of establishing buffer strips adjacent to
26 waterways according to criteria established by the division. The
27 department is required to design a sign for display by landowners
28 participating in the program. The program is financed on a
29 cost-share basis with landowners, which may include compensation
30 for moneys forgone by landowners when agreeing to enroll the
31 land.

32 BILL'S PROVISIONS — FUNDING. The bill creates a buffer strip
33 program fund (fund) under the division's management and control
34 to finance the program. The bill appropriates \$5 million from
35 the general fund to the fund each fiscal year.