

Senate Bill 436

By: Senators Williams of the 19th and Hill of the 4th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 2 of Chapter 6 of Title 2 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
2 relating to soil and water conservation districts, so as to create the Agricultural Water
3 Conservation Incentive Program; to provide for a purpose and participation; to provide for
4 priorities; to provide a noninclusive list of projects acceptable for assistance; to provide an
5 effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Article 2 of Chapter 6 of Title 2 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to soil
9 and water conservation districts, is amended by adding a new Code section at the end thereof,
10 to be designated Code Section 2-6-52, to read as follows:

11 "2-6-52.

12 (a) There is created the Agricultural Water Conservation Incentive Program. The program
13 shall be developed, implemented, and supervised by the State Soil and Water Conservation
14 Commission.

15 (b) The purpose of the program shall be to provide incentives to agricultural producers to
16 foster water conservation and enhance water quality.

17 (c) Participation in the program shall be voluntary.

18 (d) The program shall include all 159 counties and 40 soil and water conservation districts.

19 (e) Priority designations for inclusion in the program shall be under the authority of the
20 State Soil and Water Conservation Commission.

21 (f) Areas shall be included in the program as the funds are appropriated and the technical
22 assistance becomes available from the local soil and water conservation district or the State
23 Soil and Water Conservation Commission.

24 (g) Funding may be provided to assist practices including but not limited to diversions,
25 filter strips, fencing along streams, field borders, alternative watering systems, critical area
26 plantings, grassed waterways, terraces, surface-water retention structures, heavy-use areas,

1 closures of lagoons, riparian buffers or equivalent controls, animal waste systems and
2 application, manure stack houses and other waste-holding structures, irrigation system
3 enhancements, and other projects that foster water conservation and enhance water quality.
4 (h) Priority designation for inclusion in this program for state funding shall be given to
5 projects that foster water conservation and enhance water quality. To be eligible for cost
6 share funds under this Code section, a project shall be evaluated before funding is awarded
7 and after the project is completed to determine the impact on water quality."

8 **SECTION 2.**

9 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law
10 without such approval.

11 **SECTION 3.**

12 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.