

House Bill 499

By: Representatives Roberts of the 154th, McCall of the 30th, and England of the 108th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Title 2 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to agriculture, so as to
2 change certain provisions relating to the Agricultural Water Conservation Incentive Program
3 of the State Soil and Water Conservation Commission; to amend Chapter 5 of Title 12 of the
4 Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to water resources, so as to provide for
5 application of farm use data for purposes of evaluating the effectiveness of the Agricultural
6 Water Conservation Incentive Program of the State Soil and Water Conservation
7 Commission; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

9 SECTION 1.

10 Title 2 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to agriculture, is amended by
11 revising subsection (b) of Code Section 2-6-52, relating to the Agricultural Water
12 Conservation Incentive Program of the State Soil and Water Conservation Commission, as
13 follows:

14 "(b) The purpose of the program shall be to provide incentives to agricultural producers
15 to foster water conservation and enhance water quality and to evaluate the effectiveness of
16 such incentives by examining available scientific data, including but not limited to farm use
17 data collected by the commission pursuant to subsection (b.1) of Code Section 12-5-105."

18 SECTION 2.

19 Chapter 5 of Title 12 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to water resources,
20 is amended in Code Section 12-5-105, relating to permits for farm uses of ground water, by
21 revising paragraph (1) of subsection (b.1) as follows:

22 "(b.1)(1) The State Soil and Water Conservation Commission shall have the duty of
23 implementing a program of measuring farm uses of water in order to obtain clear and
24 accurate information on the patterns and amounts of such use, which information is
25 essential to the state's proper management of water resources ~~by the state~~ and the

26 evaluation of the effectiveness of the Agricultural Water Conservation Incentive Program
27 of the State Soil and Water Conservation Commission and useful to farmers for
28 improving the efficiency and effectiveness of their use of water, meeting the requirements
29 of paragraph (1) of subsection (b) of this Code section, and improving water
30 conservation. Accordingly, the State Soil and Water Conservation Commission shall on
31 behalf of the state purchase, install, operate, and maintain water-measuring devices for
32 farm uses that are required by this Code section to have permits. As used in this
33 paragraph, the term 'operate' shall include reading the water-measuring device, compiling
34 data, and reporting findings."

35 **SECTION 3.**

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