House Bill 1088 (AS PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE)

By: Representatives Parrish of the 156th, Stephens of the 164th, Williams of the 4th, Smith of the 129th, Channell of the 116th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

To amend Chapter 7 of Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the Department of Economic Development, so as to provide for the designation of "agricultural tourist attractions"; to provide legislative findings; to provide for definitions; to provide that the Department of Agriculture in conjunction with the Department of Transportation post directional signs for agricultural tourist attractions; to provide for rules and regulations; to amend Part 2 of Article 3 of Chapter 6 of Title 32 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the state highway system, so as to provide for directional signs for agricultural tourist attractions; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

Chapter 7 of Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the Department of Economic Development, is amended by adding a new article to read as follows:

"ARTICLE 6

50-7-70.

(a) The General Assembly finds that:

(1) Agricultural tourist attractions provide unique opportunities for tourists to enjoy Georgia´s resources; and

(2) Agricultural tourist attractions provide an impact on Georgia´s economy and a substantial benefit to Georgia.

(b) As used in this Code section, the term:

(1) 'Agricultural tourist attraction' means any agricultural based business providing onsite attractions to tourists that meet the criteria set out by the Department of Agriculture.

(2) 'Department' means the Department of Agriculture.

(3) 'Directional signs' shall have the meaning provided in paragraph (4) of Code Section 32-6-71.

(c) The Department of Agriculture shall:

(1) Develop criteria and an application process to determine what constitutes an agricultural tourist attraction; and

(2) Maintain a registry of approved agricultural tourist attractions.

(d) Entities wishing to be recognized by the department as an agricultural tourist attraction shall submit an application to the department with a one time application fee of up to $250 dollars.

(e) Upon approval by the department as an agricultural tourist attraction and at the request of the applicant, the department shall, in conjunction with the Department of Transportation, take the appropriate steps to place directional signs along roads in the direct proximity of the agricultural tourist attraction to direct passing traffic to the agricultural tourist attraction.

(f) The department and the Department of Transportation shall create rules and regulations for the purpose of implementing this Code section."

SECTION 2.

Part 2 of Article 3 of Chapter 6 of Title 32 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the state highway system, is amended by inserting "or" at the end of paragraph (10) and by revising paragraph (11) of Code Section 32-6-76, relating to restrictions on directional signs generally, as follows:

"(11) Advertises privately owned activities or attractions other than natural phenomena, scenic attractions, historic, educational, cultural, scientific, and religious sites, <u>agricultural tourist attractions designated by the Department of Agriculture,</u> and outdoor recreational areas and which are nationally or regionally known and are of outstanding interest to the traveling public, as determined by the State Transportation Board."

SECTION 3.

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