
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 1486 (Soria) - Climate resiliency: research farms: grant program

Version: June 10, 2026

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 3, 2026

Policy Vote: ED. 7 - 0, E.Q. 7 - 0

Mandate: No

Consultant: Lenin Del Castillo

Bill Summary: This bill requires the California Department of Education (CDE), in consultation with the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), to provide grants to public postsecondary educational institutions that are designated as Agricultural Experiment Stations or Agriculture Research Institutes by the University of California (UC) and the California State University (CSU) to develop or expand research farms to improve climate resiliency.

Fiscal Impact: This bill would authorize CDE to provide grants to public postsecondary educational institutions to develop or expand research farms. The Clean Air Bond Act of 2024, approved by voters as Proposition 4, provides \$15 million for this purpose. Additionally, Proposition 4 provides that 7 percent of the funds allocated for a grant program may be used to pay for the administrative costs of that program.

The CDE estimates administrative costs of \$428,000 each year and 1.0 position to provide the grants. To the extent that the set-aside from Proposition 4 is insufficient to cover these costs for the duration of the program, CDE may require future General Fund costs in the low hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Any costs to the CDFA are expected to be minor and absorbable costs.

Background: Existing law provides \$15,000,000, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to the State Department of Education, in consultation with CDFA, for purposes of providing grants to public postsecondary educational institutions that are designated as Agricultural Experiment Stations or Agricultural Research Institutes, to develop research farms to improve climate resiliency, as specified.

Proposed Law: This bill requires CDE, in consultation with the CDFA, to establish a grant program to provide grants to public postsecondary educational institutions that are designated as Agricultural Experiment Stations or Agricultural Research Institutes by UC and the CSU to develop or expand research farms to improve climate resiliency.

Staff Comments: The \$10 billion Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024, approved by voters in 2024 as Proposition 4, allocated \$300 million to fund improvements in climate resilience and sustainability of agricultural lands. As part of this allocation, the bond makes \$15 million available, upon appropriation, to CDE, in consultation with CDFA, to provide grants to public postsecondary educational institutions designated as agricultural experiment stations or agricultural research institutes to develop or expand research farms to improve climate resiliency. The language provides that this funding shall not exceed \$1

million per institution and “shall be constructed and maintained with environmentally sustainable infrastructure practices.”

This bill establishes a grant program for the purpose of providing state funding to CSU and UC Agricultural Research Institutes and Agricultural Experiment Stations with the goal of expanding research farms. This bill assigns the administration of the grant with CDE, which would be required to consult with CDFA in establishing the grant program.

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