



104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

SB2697

Introduced 10/14/2025, by Sen. Adriane Johnson

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

New Act

30 ILCS 105/5.1038 new

505 ILCS 90/22

505 ILCS 90/22.01

from Ch. 5, par. 82

from Ch. 5, par. 82a

Creates the Emerald City Task Force Act. Establishes the Emerald City Task Force in the Department of Natural Resources. Provides that the Task Force may consult with the Environmental Protection Agency. Lists the responsibilities of the Task Force. Requires the Task Force to submit an annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly. Lists the membership of the Task Force. Provides that fines collected under certain provisions of the Insect Pest and Plant Disease Act shall be paid into the Emerald City Fund, a special fund that is created in the State treasury, and, subject to appropriation, may be expended by and for the Emerald City Task Force in the fulfillment of its purposes, the carrying out of its responsibilities, and any other requirements as determined by the Task Force. Allows the Fund to accept donations from individuals, corporations, or other entities, including by means of corporate sponsorship related to the Emerald City Task Force. Provides that Task Force members shall serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed for their reasonable and necessary expenses from funds appropriated for that purpose. Grants the Department of Natural Resources rulemaking authority. Declares the purpose of the Act and purposes of the Task Force. Defines terms. Makes conforming changes to the State Finance Act and the Insect Pest and Plant Disease Act.

LRB104 15269 BDA 28659 b

1 AN ACT concerning State government.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the
5 Emerald City Task Force Act.

6 Section 5. Purpose. The purposes of this Act are (1) to
7 improve Illinois' ability to mitigate the damage that emerald
8 ash borers are causing throughout the State by increasing
9 public awareness of the topic; (2) to expand local government
10 access to grants and low-cost loans for the replacement of ash
11 trees with trees that are better suited to life in cities and
12 villages; (3) to address issues caused by the rules adopted to
13 alleviate emerald ash borer infestations in the State; and (4)
14 to unite persons with diverse perspectives and to encourage
15 them to collaborate with one another to tackle the obstacles
16 that emerald ash borers pose and will continue to pose if
17 nothing effective is done to address the issue.

18 Section 10. Definitions. In this Act, unless the context
19 requires otherwise:

20 "Agency" means the Environmental Protection Agency.

21 "Department" means the Department of Natural Resources.

22 "Fund" means the Emerald City Fund established under this

1 Act.

2 "Task Force" means the Emerald City Task Force established
3 under this Act.

4 Section 15. Emerald City Task Force.

5 (a) The Emerald City Task Force is established in the
6 Department of Natural Resources for the purposes described in
7 Section 5 of this Act. The Task Force may consult with the
8 Environmental Protection Agency, and the Agency may consult
9 with the Task Force, at the discretion of the Task Force or the
10 Agency.

11 (b) The Task Force has the following responsibilities:

12 (1) launching public awareness campaigns throughout
13 Illinois to educate residents about the many detrimental
14 effects of emerald ash borers and to describe actions
15 residents can take to decrease the spread of these
16 invasive insects;

17 (2) supporting and coordinating increased funding,
18 grants, and low-cost loans to municipalities and units of
19 local government to replace dead ash trees;

20 (3) organizing community engagement activities for
21 children, such as poster, bumper-sticker, and slogan
22 contests;

23 (4) investigating the reasons why the statewide
24 quarantine is not as effective as hoped by, among other
25 things, determining whether there is or was a lack of

1 people willing to serve as enforcement officers, a lack of
2 funding to isolate quarantine zones, a lack of
3 equipment-based resources, or other causes or factors
4 contributing to the lack of program effectiveness;

5 (5) investigating the reasons why the low-cost loans
6 being given to local governments for tree replacement are
7 not as effective as hoped by, among other things,
8 determining whether or not the loans themselves are
9 effective, whether the loans simply need to be expanded
10 across greater areas, or whether the relevant program has
11 other defects that deter local governments from making use
12 of the loans; and

13 (6) researching methods to mitigate the spread of
14 emerald ash borers in a sustainable manner.

15 (c) Public awareness campaigns under this Section and
16 support and coordination for municipalities and units of local
17 government under this Section shall use a mixture of the
18 objective findings of researchers, as well as
19 emotionally-touching and heartfelt first-hand accounts and
20 stories from people who have been hit the hardest by emerald
21 ash borers. The Task Force shall launch public awareness
22 campaigns through (1) partnerships with public schools, (2)
23 social media platforms, (3) community-wide awareness events,
24 (4) posters and QR codes for residents to learn more about
25 emerald ash borers, and (5) explaining how residents can (i)
26 play their part in mitigating the spread of emerald ash borers

1 or (ii) directly get involved with the Emerald City Task Force
2 by donating money or by becoming a volunteer.

3 (d) By January 1, 2027, and by January 1 of each year
4 thereafter, the Task Force shall submit a report to the
5 General Assembly, as provided in Section 3.1 of the General
6 Assembly Organization Act, and to the Governor on the actions
7 it has taken and the progress it has made toward addressing its
8 responsibilities in the immediately preceding year.

9 Section 20. Task Force membership; meetings; support;
10 funding.

11 (a) The Emerald City Task Force shall consist of the
12 following members:

13 (1) the Director of Natural Resources or the
14 Director's designee, who shall serve as a co-chairperson;

15 (2) the Director of the Environmental Protection
16 Agency or the Director's designee, who shall serve as a
17 co-chairperson;

18 (3) one member of the Senate who is appointed by the
19 President of the Senate and who is willing (i) to help
20 organize educational campaigns throughout Illinois in
21 order to inform residents about the detrimental effects of
22 emerald ash borers from a variety of perspectives and (ii)
23 to speak with local government officials to ascertain the
24 reason for the lower-than-hoped use of low-cost loans;

25 (4) one member of the Senate who is appointed by the

1 Senate Minority Leader and who is willing (i) to help
2 organize educational campaigns throughout Illinois in
3 order to inform residents about the detrimental effects of
4 emerald ash borers from a variety of perspectives and (ii)
5 to speak with local government officials to ascertain the
6 reason for the lower-than-hoped use of low-cost loans;

7 (5) one member of the House of Representatives who is
8 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives
9 and who is willing (i) to help organize educational
10 campaigns throughout Illinois in order to inform residents
11 about the detrimental effects of emerald ash borers from a
12 variety of perspectives and (ii) to speak with local
13 government officials to ascertain the reason for the
14 lower-than-hoped use of low-cost loans;

15 (6) one member of the House of Representatives who is
16 appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of
17 Representatives and who is willing (i) to help organize
18 educational campaigns throughout Illinois in order to
19 inform residents about the detrimental effects of emerald
20 ash borers from a variety of perspectives and (ii) to
21 speak with local government officials to ascertain the
22 reason for the lower-than-hoped use of low-cost loans;

23 (7) 3 residents of the State who are appointed by the
24 Governor and who are willing to share the impact that
25 emerald ash borers have had on them from a personal
26 perspective, including at least one person who has worked

1 in the ash tree industry and at least one person whose
2 household falls under the definition of "low-income
3 household" or "very low-income household" under Section 3
4 of the Illinois Affordable Housing Act;

5 (8) 3 residents of the State who are appointed by the
6 Governor and who either reside in environmental justice
7 communities, as defined by the Illinois Power Agency, or
8 in municipalities without the funding to replace ash
9 trees;

10 (9) 3 residents of the State who are appointed by the
11 Governor and who are willing to help organize educational
12 campaigns throughout Illinois in order to inform residents
13 about the detrimental effects of emerald ash borers from a
14 variety of perspectives;

15 (10) 3 experts or other professionals who are
16 appointed by the Governor and who are able to investigate
17 the reasons that the statewide quarantine regarding
18 emerald ash borers is or was not as effective as hoped; and

19 (11) 3 experts or other researchers, such as
20 researchers from the University of Illinois' College of
21 Agriculture, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences, who are
22 appointed by the Governor and are able to investigate
23 methods to decrease the spread of emerald ash borers in a
24 sustainable manner.

25 (b) The Task Force shall convene and meet at the call of a
26 co-chairperson and shall meet as frequently as necessary to

1 carry out its duties as required by this Act.

2 (c) The Department of Natural Resources shall provide
3 administrative and other support to the Task Force. Upon
4 reasonable request by the Task Force, the Environmental
5 Protection Agency shall also provide administrative and other
6 support to the Task Force.

7 (d) Fines collected for violations of rules adopted under
8 Section 35 of the Insect Pest and Plant Disease Act shall be
9 paid into the Emerald City Fund, a special fund that is created
10 in the State treasury, and, subject to appropriation, may be
11 expended by and for the Emerald City Task Force in the
12 fulfillment of its purposes, the carrying out of its
13 responsibilities, and any other requirements as determined by
14 the Task Force. The Fund may also accept donations from
15 individuals, corporations, or other entities, including by
16 means of corporate sponsorship related to the Emerald City
17 Task Force. Task Force members shall serve without
18 compensation but shall be reimbursed for their reasonable and
19 necessary expenses from funds appropriated for that purpose.

20 Section 25. Rulemaking. The Department may adopt rules
21 necessary to implement recommendations of the Task Force.

22 Section 70. The State Finance Act is amended by adding
23 Section 5.1038 as follows:

1 (30 ILCS 105/5.1038 new)

2 Sec. 5.1038. The Emerald City Fund.

3 Section 75. The Insect Pest and Plant Disease Act is
4 amended by changing Sections 22 and 22.01 as follows:

5 (505 ILCS 90/22) (from Ch. 5, par. 82)

6 Sec. 22. Any person who shall violate any of the
7 provisions of this Act with reference to the sale, shipment,
8 transportation, receipt or delivery of nursery stock without
9 inspection or certificate, or with reference to treatment of
10 nursery stock, plants, plant products or other property; or
11 who shall forge, counterfeit, deface, alter, destroy or
12 wrongfully use a certificate belonging to another person or
13 fail to obtain a certificate of inspection or nursery dealer's
14 certificate; or who shall use a certificate after it has been
15 suspended or revoked or has expired; or who shall transport,
16 receive or convey any article into the State of Illinois in
17 violation of any proclamation of the Governor or regulation of
18 the Department or any Federal quarantine, or who, having
19 received the same directly or indirectly shall refuse to
20 dispose of the same as the Department may direct; or who shall
21 violate any proclamation of the Governor or quarantine or
22 rule, regulation or order of the Department as provided for in
23 this Act; or who shall maintain a nuisance after receiving
24 notice from the Department to abate the same shall be adjudged

1 guilty of a business offense and shall be subject to a fine of
2 not less than \$1,000 nor more than \$10,000. Except for fines
3 collected for violations of rules adopted under Section 35 of
4 this Act, the ~~The~~ fines collected under this Act shall be paid
5 to the Department and by it paid into the Pesticide Control
6 Fund, Director as Trustee, to be used for the administration
7 of this Act. Fines collected for violations of rules adopted
8 under Section 35 of this Act shall be paid into the Emerald
9 City Fund established under Section 20 of the Emerald City
10 Task Force Act to be used according to Section 20 of the
11 Emerald City Task Force Act.

12 Any person who impedes, obstructs, hinders or otherwise
13 prevents or attempts to prevent the Director in the
14 performance of official duties shall be guilty of a Class B
15 misdemeanor for the first violation and guilty of a Class A
16 misdemeanor for subsequent violations. Any person using
17 physical force against the Director in the performance of
18 official duties shall be guilty of a Class 4 felony.

19 (Source: P.A. 85-324.)

20 (505 ILCS 90/22.01) (from Ch. 5, par. 82a)

21 Sec. 22.01. When an administrative hearing is held, the
22 hearing officer shall upon determination of a violation, on a
23 per-occurrence basis, assess an appropriate administrative
24 monetary penalty. The Department shall collect the
25 administrative monetary penalty which will be paid as

1 described under Section 22 of this Act ~~to the Pesticide~~
2 ~~Control Fund to be used for the administration of this Act~~ for
3 the following violations:

4 I. A fine of \$150 shall be imposed for each of the
5 following violations:

6 A. Thwarting or hindering an inspection authorized or
7 required by this Act by misrepresenting or concealing
8 facts or conditions.

9 B. Selling, offering or exposing for sale, or
10 distributing nursery stock which is not accompanied by a
11 shipping tag or label bearing a copy of the certificate of
12 inspection or nursery dealer's certificate.

13 C. Failing to comply with any of the provisions of
14 this Act, or the rules and regulations promulgated
15 hereunder for which a fine for a specific violation is not
16 specified.

17 D. Making a false declaration of acreage or causing
18 any concealment of nursery stock from inspection by the
19 Department.

20 E. Selling, offering for sale, or distributing nursery
21 stock or other article infested with injurious insect
22 pests or infected with injurious plant diseases.

23 II. A fine of \$300 shall be imposed for each of the
24 following violations:

25 A. Failing to carry out the treatment or destruction
26 of any plant pest or regulated article in accordance with

1 official notification from the Director.

2 B. Selling, transporting, or offering for sale nursery
3 stock which has not been inspected and which is not
4 covered by a valid certificate of inspection.

5 C. Selling, offering or exposing for sale or
6 delivering any nursery stock without having a current
7 certificate of inspection or nursery dealer's certificate.

8 III. A fine of \$500 shall be imposed for each of the
9 following violations:

10 A. Using an invalid, suspended, or revoked nursery
11 certificate or nursery dealer's certificate in the sale or
12 distribution of nursery stock.

13 B. Neglecting or refusing to comply with provisions of
14 this Act or any lawful order of the Director.

15 C. Moving any regulated article into or out of a
16 quarantined area unless such regulated article has been
17 treated or handled as provided by the requirements of said
18 quarantine.

19 D. Selling, installing or otherwise distributing
20 nursery stock or other article which has been placed on
21 stop-sale.

22 IV. A fine of not less than \$500 but not greater than
23 \$5,000 shall be imposed for each of the following violations
24 related to a devastating insect or plant disease:

25 A. Thwarting or hindering an inspection by
26 misrepresenting or concealing facts or conditions related

1 to compliance with the terms of the quarantine.

2 B. Selling, offering for sale, or distributing nursery
3 stock or other articles infested with devastating insects
4 or plant diseases in violation of the quarantine.

5 C. Failing to carry out the treatment or destruction
6 of any devastating insect or plant disease or regulated
7 article as required under the terms of the quarantine and
8 in accordance with official notification from the
9 Director.

10 D. Moving any regulated article into or out of the
11 quarantined area unless the regulated article has been
12 treated or handled as provided by the requirements of the
13 quarantine.

14 E. Falsifying a compliance agreement under the
15 quarantine.

16 Any penalty not paid within 60 days of notice from the
17 Department shall be submitted to the Attorney General's office
18 for collection. Failure to pay a penalty shall also be grounds
19 for suspension or revocation of certificates and permits.

20 (Source: P.A. 91-713, eff. 6-2-00.)