

Lawmakers Propose Grant Program For Rural Youth

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Lancaster Farming Staff
HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — On Monday, state Rep. Kenneth Cole, chairman of the House Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee, and state Rep. Samuel Hayes, of Blair County, announced proposed legislation that would establish a grant program for rural youth.

The legislation would use funds made available through federal sources which are allocated to a restricted account, representing the remaining assets of the defunct Pennsylvania Rural Rehabilitation Corporation.

Under the program, grants to individual chapters of qualifying organizations are to range from \$2,500 to \$15,000, depending on the project for which the grant is to

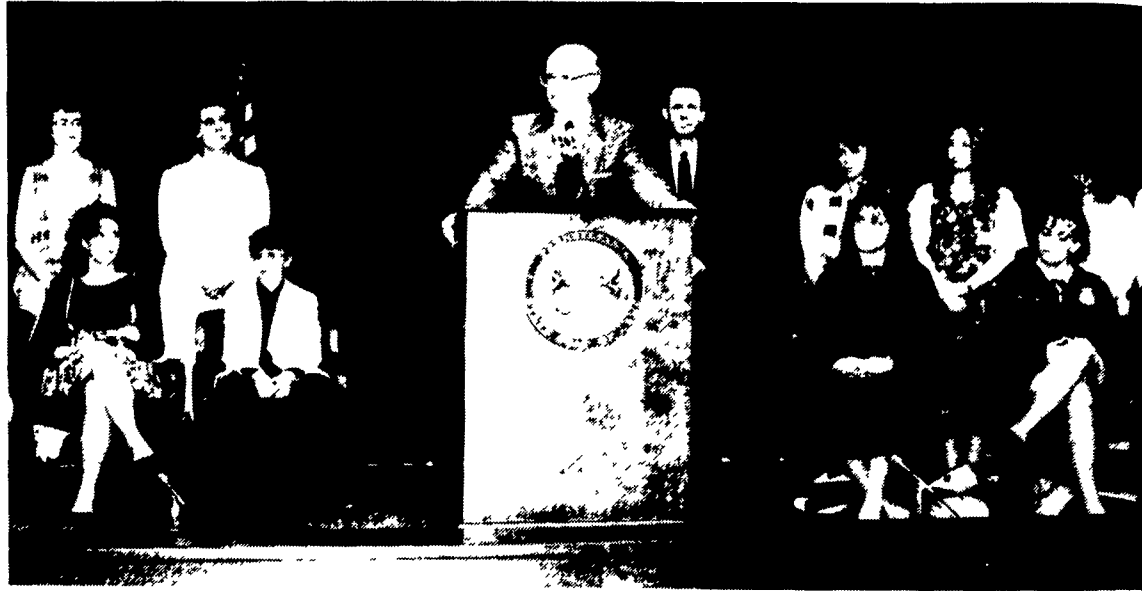
be used.

Some of the types of projects outlined by Rep. Cole as targeted for support through the grant program include educational seminars; seminars and field trips; special projects; agricultural safety training; and certain capital projects and equipment purchases.

An 11-member board, to be chaired by the state secretary of agriculture would administer the grant program.

The grant program is designed for, but not restricted to, rural youth organizations such as 4-H and FFA.

"These organizations have scraped along, funded through membership fees, fundraising efforts, and private donations," Cole said. "They receive limited funding each year from our agricultural fair program, but it's a



State Rep. Kenneth Cole, D-Adams County, announces proposed legislation to create a grant program for rural youth. Standing behind Cole, and also supporting the legislation is Rep. Samuel Hayes, R-Blair County. A number of rural youth also are on stage in support of the legislation.

Berks Co. Farm Directory Under Way

LEESPORT (Berks Co.) — Farm producers can now list foods grown for direct sale to consumers in the 1991 "Fresh From Berks County Farms" directory.

"Many farms last year benefited from the popular directory, which was printed in an area newspaper and was used as a handout to consumers," said L. Jeffrey Patton, Lehigh Co. marketing agent.

Patton said that farmers must fill out a form, available from the Berks Co. Extension Office, P.O. Box 520, Leesport, PA 19533, (215) 378-1327. There is no fee.

Types of farms that can be listed include those growing vegetables, potatoes and herbs; milk and dairy products; chicken, turkey, and

eggs; small fruits, tree fruits, and cider; beef, pork, lamb, wool, and fish; and wine, honey, baked goods, and other farm-made foods.

Also, other items such as pumpkins, bedding and potted plants, farm tours, hay, and Christmas trees can also be listed in the directory.

"The intent of 'Fresh From Berks County Farms' is to show where consumers can find farm-fresh products," said Patton. "This directory excludes those who don't consider themselves 'farm producers,' such as garden centers, gardeners, and non-farming produce or meat vendors."

Those who need more information can contact Patton at (215) 391-9840.

very small amount in comparison to all they do.

"The Agriculture and Rural Youth Development Act will provide a steady and dependable source of funding for organizations in this state that help young people in our agricultural and rural communities."

In addition to the two legislators, a number of youth were present during the press conference and testified as to the worth of rural youth development programs and

the need for assistance.

Those present representing 4-H were Abe Bucher, Amy Miller, Amy Cunningham, Travis Green, Mandy Hilbert, Debbie Wilkinson, Doris Wilkinson, Brandy Carey, Mary Beth Stahl, Tonyia Washburn, Beau Ramsburg, Melanie Kuntz and Maribel Gabrielson.

Students representing FFA included Christopher Smith, Michelle Sullivan, Traci Lobaugh, Anisia Sapeg and Emily Lott.

According to Cole, the House

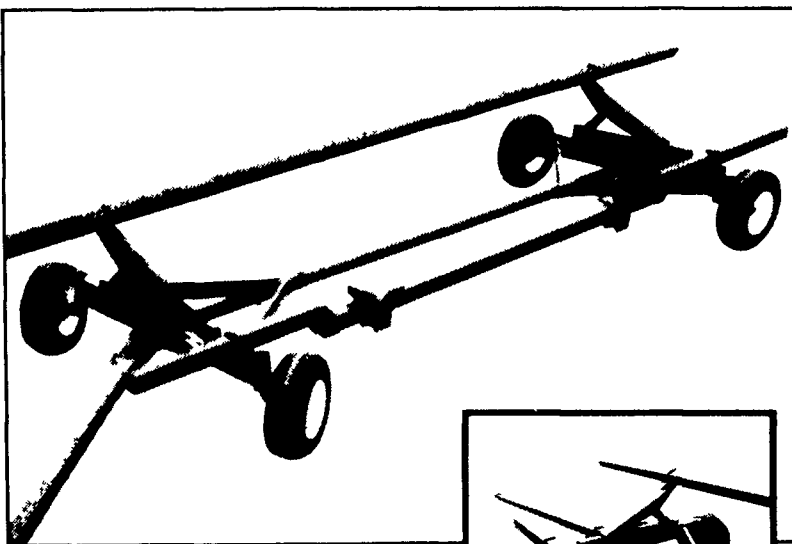
Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee will be discussing the bill soon.

"With just a little seed money, the commonwealth can support millions of dollars worth of privately funded efforts by Pennsylvania youth organizations.

"I think this is a worthy goal, and I think most of my colleagues will agree, because the long term benefits of this program will show up in communities and on farms across our state."

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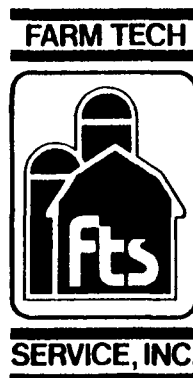
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