# Senate Bill S7736B

2023-2024 Legislative Session

Relates to permits and financial security for reclamation for salt mining beneath a lake **M** DOWNLOAD BILL TEXT PDF

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Lea Webb (D, WF) 52ND SENATE DISTRICT

CURRENT BILL STATUS -In Assembly Committee



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## **ACTIONS**

## **HIDE ACTIONS (12)**



## Assembly Actions - Lowercase Senate Actions - UPPERCASE

Jun 07, 2024	Referred To Environmental Conservation DELIVERED TO ASSEMBLY PASSED SENATE
May 23, 2024	ADVANCED TO THIRD READING
May 22, 2024	2ND REPORT CAL.
May 21, 2024	1ST REPORT CAL.1311
May 15, 2024	PRINT NUMBER 7736B
May 15, 2024	AMEND AND RECOMMIT TO ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Mar 22, 2024	PRINT NUMBER 7736A
Mar 22, 2024	AMEND AND RECOMMIT TO ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
Jan 03, 2024	REFERRED TO ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
Nov 03, 2023	REFERRED TO RULES

## **VOTES**

## **HIDE VOTES**

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## JUN 7, 2024 - FLOOR VOTE

S7736B





- O ABSENT
- 2 EXCUSED
- O ABSTAINEI

## **VIEW FLOOR VOTE DETAILS**



# MAY 21, 2024 - ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION COMMITTEE VOTE

S7736B

10 AYE

0 NAY

1 AYE WITH RESERVATIONS
0 ABSENT
0 EXCUSED

# VIEW ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION COMMITTEE VOTE DETAILS

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## **BILL AMENDMENTS**

B (ACTIVE)



## CO-SPONSORS



Rachel May (D, WF) 48TH SENATE DISTRICT



Pete Harckham (D, WF) 40TH SENATE DISTRICT

2023-S7736B (ACTIVE) - DETAILS

#### **Current Committee:**

**Assembly Environmental Conservation** 

Law Section:

**Environmental Conservation Law** 

Laws Affected:

Amd §§23-2711 & 23-2715, En Con L; amd §81, Pub Lds L

2023-S7736B (ACTIVE) - SUMMARY

Relates to permits and financial security for reclamation for salt mining beneath a lake; requires such permits to be subject to environmental quality review procedures; requires financial security to cover any damages directly or indirectly resulting from salt mining activities beneath a lake, including, but not limited to, those resulting from collapse or water contamination.

2023-S7736B (ACTIVE) - SPONSOR MEMO

BILL NUMBER: S7736B

SPONSOR: WEBB

TITLE OF BILL:

An act to amend the environmental conservation law and the public lands law, in relation to permits and financial security for reclamation for salt mining beneath a lake

#### PURPOSE:

Relates to permits and financial security for reclamation for salt mining beneath a lake SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS:

Section 1 of the bill amends subdivisions 11 and 12 of section 23–2711 of the environmental conservation law and adds new subdivisions 11–a and 14 to add requirements to the permit renewal process for projects that allow salt mining beneath a lake.

Section 2 amends subdivision 6 of section 23-2715 of the environmental conservation law regarding the required financial security for reclamation for projects that include salt mining beneath a lake.

Section 3 adds a new subdivision 3 to section 81 of the public lands law that requires the duration of such permit, consent or lease from New York State with respect to salt mining beneath a lake be tied to the duration of the permit issued by the department of environmental conservation pursuant to title 27 of article 23 of the environmental conservation law.

Section 4 adds a severability clause. Section 5 adds the effective date.

#### JUSTIFICATION:

In August of 2023, Cargill, Inc. began the process of putting up for sale the Cayuga Salt Mine (CSM) it has operated for more than five (5) decades beneath Cayuga Lake in Lansing, NY in Tompkins County, where it operates on several thousand acres of land it leases from New York State. While the Mine Safety and Health Administration has been able to inspect the CSM operation for worker safety, the state Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has not regularly inspected the mine for issues related to protecting the Cayuga Lake ecosystem. Now, after decades of mining by Cargill, Cayuga Lake is saltier than nearly all the other Finger Lakes. Further, due to continued mining and geologic conditions, without intervention from the DEC to require an environmental review, the lake is at risk of becoming permanently more saline.

NYS public lands law authorizes the state Office of General Services (OGS) to grant the use of state-owned lands for mining purposes, including those lands found beneath lakes. Since the mid 1970s, OGS has provided consent orders to the CSM owner, Cargill, to allow for salt mining under Cayuga Lake. The most recent consent order in 2019 provided that Cargill would be able to provide notice to OGS and then extend the consent order for ten years. This was done without the performance of an environmental impact statement (EIS) or environmental quality review (SEAR) under the New York State Department of

Environmental Conservation.

DEC is also responsible for providing additional permitting through the Mined Land Reclamation Law, that includes reclamation and closure requirements of mined lands. Past civil lawsuits challenging the continuance of mining permits by the DEC have been dismissed. The assertions made in these lawsuits centered on the lack of DEC oversight or the requirement of an EIS on the mine in light of significant environmental issues with the Retsof salt mine in Livingston County, which, in 1994, collapsed and flooded, causing two sinkholes, significant subsidence damage, wells going dry, and the salinization of a freshwater aquifer. The geological similarities of these two mines has the communities surrounding Cayuga lake and its watershed justifiably concerned about the significant environmental and ecological risks of mine collapse.

Cayuga Lake and its watershed is the largest in the region spanning seven (7) counties, covering 860 square miles with more than 140 streams that flow into the lake. Cayuga Lake itself is surrounded by a multitude of communities and supports a tourist economy seeking the natural beauty of the lake and the opportunity to visit the many vineyards found along the Cayuga Lake Wine Trail. An accident within the salt mine below Cayuga Lake could have an immediate and severe impact, reducing the quality of the drinking water of about 100,000 residents and endangering the region's \$3 billion, 60,000-employee food, wine and

recreational tourism economy.

Despite an EIS being fully warranted by the scope of the environmental risk posed by salt mining under a lake, the DEC, has, for decades, not required the owners of Cayuga Salt Mine to cooperate with an EIS process, despite repeated requests to do so. This legislation would bolster existing protections by explicitly requiring an environmental impact statement for mining under a lake where there has not been one for the preceding 20 years, as well as an updated reclamation plan along with appropriate financial security to ensure the communities relying on Cayuga Lake and its watershed are protected from potential harm.

#### LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

New bill.

#### FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

None to state.

## EFFECTIVE DATE:

This act shall take effect on the thirtieth day provided that section 2 of the bill shall take effect on the ninetieth day. Effective immediate—ly, the addition, amendment and or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and completed on or before such effective date.

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2023-S7736B (ACTIVE) - BILL TEXT 👲 DOWNLOAD PDF

## STATE OF NEW YORK

7736--B

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

November 3, 2023

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Introduced by Sens. WEBB, MAY, HARCKHAM -- read twice and ordered print-

ed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Rules --

recommitted to the Committee on Environmental Conservation in accord-

ance with Senate Rule 6, sec. 8 — committee discharged, bill amended,

ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee --

committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and

recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the environmental conservation law and the public lands

law, in relation to permits and financial security for reclamation for

salt mining beneath a lake

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEM-

#### BLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Subdivisions 11 and 12 of section 23–2711 of the environ-

mental conservation law, as added by chapter 166 of the laws of 1991,

are amended and two new subdivisions 11-a and 14 are added to read as

follows:

following:

- 11. Permits issued pursuant to this title shall
  be renewable. A
  complete application for renewal shall contain the
  - (a) completed application forms;
- (b) an updated mining plan map consistent with
  paragraph (a) of subdi-

vision one of section 23-2713 of this title and including an identifica-

tion of the area to be mined during the proposed permit term;

(c) a description of any changes to the mined land-use plan, WHICH

SHALL INCLUDE, WITH RESPECT TO A PERMIT FOR SALT MINING BENEATH A LAKE,

AN UPDATED RECLAMATION PLAN OF SURFACE AND SUBSURFACE AFFECTED LAND

ACCOUNTING FOR ANY DIFFERENCES IN CIRCUMSTANCES SINCE THE RECLAMATION

PLAN WAS LAST APPROVED BY THE DEPARTMENT; [and]

(d) an identification of reclamation accomplished during the existing

permit term; AND

(E) A THIRTY-YEAR MONITORING PLAN WITH RESPECT TO A PERMIT FOR SALT

MINING BENEATH A LAKE OF ALL AFFECTED LANDS, SURFACE AND SUBSURFACE.

EXPLANATION——Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets

[ ] is old law to be omitted.

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11-A. NOTWITHSTANDING ANY PROVISION OF THIS SECTION TO THE CONTRARY,

WITH RESPECT TO SALT MINING BENEATH A LAKE WHERE NO ENVIRONMENTAL

IMPACT STATEMENT HAS BEEN PREPARED PURSUANT TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALI-

TY REVIEW REQUIREMENTS OF ARTICLE EIGHT OF THIS CHAPTER WITH

RESPECT TO SUCH MINING WITHIN THE PRECEDING TWENTY YEARS, ANY PERMIT

RENEWAL APPLICATION SHALL:

(A) NOT CONSTITUTE A MINOR PROJECT WITHIN THE MEANING OF ARTICLE

SEVENTY OF THIS CHAPTER;

- (B) BE TREATED AS AN APPLICATION FOR A NEW PERMIT;
- (C) CONSTITUTE AN ACTION REQUIRING ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW PURSU-

ANT TO ARTICLE EIGHT OF THIS CHAPTER; AND

(D) BE DEEMED AN ACTION THAT IS LIKELY TO REQUIRE THE PREPARATION OF

AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT PURSUANT TO SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF PARA-

GRAPH (C) OF SUBDIVISION TWO OF SECTION 8-0113 OF THIS CHAPTER.

12. The procedure for transfer of a permit issued pursuant to this

title is the procedure for permit modification pursuant to article

seventy of this chapter; PROVIDED, HOWEVER, AND NOTWITHSTANDING SUBDIVI-

SION THIRTEEN OF THIS SECTION OR ANY OTHER PROVISION OF THIS SECTION TO

THE CONTRARY, ANY TRANSFER OR MODIFICATION OF A PERMIT TO ENGAGE IN SALT

MINING ACTIVITIES BENEATH A LAKE SHALL CONSTITUTE A MATERIAL MODIFICA-

TION OF THE PERMIT AND, IF NO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT HAS BEEN

PREPARED PURSUANT TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW REQUIREMENTS OF

ARTICLE EIGHT OF THIS CHAPTER WITH RESPECT TO SUCH MINING WITHIN THE

PRECEDING TWENTY YEARS, SUCH TRANSFER OR MODIFICATION SHALL:

(A) NOT CONSTITUTE A MINOR PROJECT WITHIN THE

MEANING OF ARTICLE

SEVENTY OF THIS CHAPTER;

- (B) BE TREATED AS AN APPLICATION FOR A NEW PERMIT;
- (C) CONSTITUTE AN ACTION REQUIRING ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW PURSU—

ANT TO ARTICLE EIGHT OF THIS CHAPTER; AND

(D) BE DEEMED AN ACTION THAT IS LIKELY TO REQUIRE THE PREPARATION OF

AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT PURSUANT TO SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF PARA-

GRAPH (C) OF SUBDIVISION TWO OF SECTION 8-0113 OF THIS CHAPTER.

14. AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE AND IN ANY EVENT WITHIN ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY

DAYS OF THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS SUBDIVISION, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL

PREPARE AN ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY WITH RESPECT TO ANY SALT MINING BENEATH A

LAKE IF NO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT HAS BEEN PREPARED WITHIN THE

PRECEDING TWENTY YEARS WITH RESPECT TO SUCH MINING. ANY HOLDER OF A

PERMIT TO MINE SALT BENEATH A LAKE SHALL COMPLY WITH ALL REASONABLE

REQUESTS OF THE DEPARTMENT IN CONNECTION WITH PREPARATION OF SUCH AN

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY. THE PREPARATION OF SUCH ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY SHALL

INCLUDE A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF SUCH

MINING, INCLUDING CONSIDERATION OF THE EFFECTS OF PAST MINING AND THEIR

POTENTIAL FUTURE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS, IN THE SHORT-TERM AND THE LONG-

TERM; ANY ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED SHOULD

THE MINING CONTINUE; ALTERNATIVES TO THE CONTINUATION OF MINING; ANY

IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES WHICH WOULD BE

INVOLVED IN THE CONTINUED OPERATION; MITIGATION MEASURES PROPOSED TO

MINIMIZE THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT; THE PRESENT AND FUTURE EFFECTS OF

CONTINUED ACTION ON PUBLIC DRINKING WATER

SUPPLIES; THE PRESENT AND

FUTURE EFFECTS OF CONTINUED ACTION ON THE RECREATIONAL USE AND ECONOMIC

ACTIVITY SUPPORTED BY THE LAKE, AND SUCH OTHER INFORMATION CONSISTENT

WITH THE PURPOSE OF THIS SUBDIVISION AS MAY BE APPROPRIATE. IN CONDUCT-

ING SUCH STUDY, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ENGAGE IN A ROBUST PUBLIC PARTIC-

IPATION PROCESS TO ENSURE THAT THE CONCERNS OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS ARE

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HEARD AND INFORM THE FINAL STUDY. THE INITIAL FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

SHALL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC ON THE DEPARTMENT'S WEBSITE NO

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LATER THAN ONE HUNDRED TWENTY DAYS AFTER THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS

SUBDIVISION, AND SHALL BE SUBJECT TO A THIRTY DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD.

THE DEPARTMENT SHALL CONDUCT AT LEAST ONE PUBLIC HEARING DURING THE

THIRTY DAY COMMENT PERIOD FOR REVIEW OF THE INITIAL FINDINGS. THE FINAL

STUDY SHALL RESPOND TO AND, IF APPROPRIATE, INCORPORATE COMMENTS

RECEIVED FROM THE PUBLIC AND BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC ON THE

DEPARTMENT'S WEBSITE IN UNREDACTED FORM.

§ 2. Section 23-2715 of the environmental conservation law, as amended

by chapter 166 of the laws of 1991, subdivision 6 as amended by chapter

60 of the laws of 1993, is amended to read as follows:  $\S 23-2715$ . Financial security for reclamation.

1. Before the department may issue a permit, the applicant, unless

exempt, shall furnish financial security (A) to ensure the performance

of reclamation as provided in the approved mined landuse plan, (B) TO

COVER ANY DAMAGES DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY RESULTING FROM SALT MINING

ACTIVITIES BENEATH A LAKE, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED

TO, THOSE RESULT-

ING FROM COLLAPSE OR WATER CONTAMINATION, and (C) naming the state as

beneficiary. Financial security shall be in the form of a bond from a

corporate surety licensed to do business as such in the state or any

other form the department may deem acceptable. Any interest accruing as

a result of such security shall be the exclusive property of the permittee.

The department shall determine the amount, condition, and terms of

the financial security. The amount shall be based upon the estimated

cost of reclaiming the affected land AND THE ESTIMATED LIABILITY FROM

POTENTIAL DAMAGES DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY RESULTING FROM SALT MINING

ACTIVITIES BENEATH A LAKE, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THOSE RESULT—

ING FROM COLLAPSE OR WATER CONTAMINATION, which shall be based on infor-

mation contained in the permit application, THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

REVIEW CONDUCTED PURSUANT TO ARTICLE EIGHT OF THIS CHAPTER AND ANY ENVI-

RONMENTAL STUDY CONDUCTED PURSUANT TO SUBDIVISION FOURTEEN OF SECTION

23-2711 OF THIS TITLE and upon such information as an investigation by

the department may disclose. AT A MINIMUM, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL CONSIDER

THE PARTICULAR CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE MINE AND MINING ACTIVITIES IN MAKING

DETERMINATIONS PURSUANT TO THIS SUBDIVISION RELATED TO FINANCIAL SECURI-

TY AMOUNTS REQUIRED TO COVER POTENTIAL DAMAGES DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY

RESULTING FROM SALT MINING ACTIVITIES BENEATH A LAKE, INCLUDING, BUT NOT

LIMITED TO, THOSE RESULTING FROM COLLAPSE OR WATER CONTAMINATION.

CONSIDERATION IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES SHALL INCLUDE,

BUT NOT BE LIMITED

T0:

(A) THOSE FACTORS CONSIDERED IN DETERMINING THE AMOUNT OF FINANCIAL

SECURITY TO ENSURE PERFORMANCE OF RECLAMATION;

- (B) GEOLOGIC, HYDROLOGIC, AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS;
- (C) THE PRESENCE OF ANY ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS OR RESOURCES;
  - (D) THE PRESENCE OF PERSONS AND PROPERTY; AND

The New York State Senate





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POTENTIAL DAMAGES

DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY RESULTING FROM SALT MINING ACTIVITIES

BENEATH A LAKE OR TO REVIEW THE DETERMINATION OF THE DEPARTMENT WITH

RESPECT THERETO AND, IN THE CASE OF A REVIEW, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL

INCORPORATE THE APPROPRIATE RECOMMENDATIONS BY SUCH INDEPENDENT THIRD-

PARTY REVIEWER INTO ITS FINAL DETERMINATION.

3. The financial security shall remain in full force and effect until

the department has approved the reclamation AND DETERMINED THAT THERE IS

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NO CONTINUING RISK OF DAMAGES DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY FROM SALT MINING

ACTIVITIES BENEATH A LAKE, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THOSE RESULT-

ING FROM COLLAPSE OR WATER CONTAMINATION. At the discretion of the

department, the permittee may secure the release of that portion of the

financial security for affected land on which reclamation has been

completed and approved by the department.

4. If the financial security shall for any reason be cancelled, within

thirty days after receiving notice thereof, the permittee shall provide

a valid replacement under the same conditions as described in this

section. Failure to provide a replacement bond within such period may,

at the discretion of the commissioner, result in the immediate suspen-

sion of the mining permit by the department.

- 5. If a permit is suspended or revoked, the department may require the permittee to commence reclamation upon thirty days notice.
- 6. If the permittee fails to commence or to complete the reclamation

as required, the department may attach the financial security furnished

by the permittee. In any event, the full cost of completing reclamation

AND ANY DAMAGES DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY RESULTING FROM SALT MINING ACTIV-

ITIES BENEATH A LAKE, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THOSE RESULTING

FROM COLLAPSE OR WATER CONTAMINATION shall be the personal liability of

the permittee and/or the person engaged in mining and the department,

acting by the attorney general, may bring suit to recover all costs to

secure the reclamation AND DAMAGES DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY RESULTING FROM

SALT MINING ACTIVITIES BENEATH A LAKE not covered by the financial secu-

rity. The materials, machinery, implements and tools of every

description which may be found at the mine, or other assets of the

permittee and/or the person engaged in mining shall be subject to a lien

of the department for the amount expended for reclamation of affected

lands, AND FOR MAKING WHOLE ANY PARTIES SUFFERING ANY DAMAGES DIRECTLY

OR INDIRECTLY RESULTING FROM SALT MINING ACTIVITIES BENEATH A LAKE, and

shall not be removed without the written consent of the department. Such

lien may be foreclosed by the attorney general in the same manner as a

mechanic's lien. Any and all moneys recovered shall be deposited in the

environmental regulatory account pursuant to section 72-1009 of this chapter.

Political subdivisions, municipalities, the United States and any

of its agencies and agencies of the state shall be exempt from the

requirements of this section.

8. ANY PERMITTEE WHICH HAS FURNISHED A FINANCIAL SECURITY WHICH IS NOT

IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SECTION ON THE EFFECTIVE

DATE OF THIS SUBDIVISION SHALL BE IN VIOLATION OF THIS SECTION IF SUCH

FINANCIAL SECURITY IS NOT BROUGHT INTO COMPLIANCE WITHIN SIX MONTHS OF

SUCH EFFECTIVE DATE.

§ 3. Section 81 of the public lands law is amended by adding a new

subdivision 3 to read as follows:

3. NOTWITHSTANDING SUBDIVISIONS ONE AND TWO OF THIS SECTION, WITH

RESPECT TO A PERMIT, CONSENT, OR LEASE ISSUED WITH RESPECT TO SALT

MINING ACTIVITIES BENEATH A LAKE, THE DURATION OF SUCH PERMIT, CONSENT,

OR LEASE SHALL NOT BE LONGER THAN THE DURATION FOR WHICH MINING IS

ALLOWABLE UNDER THE PERMIT ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL

CONSERVATION PURSUANT TO TITLE TWENTY-SEVEN OF ARTICLE TWENTY-THREE OF

THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION LAW IN RESPECT OF SUCH MINING.

§ 4. Severability. If any provision of this act, or any application of

any provision of this act, is held to be invalid, that shall not affect

the validity or effectiveness of any other provision

of this act, or of any other application of any provision of this act, which can be given

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effect without that provision or application; and to that end, the

provisions and applications of this act are severable.

§ 5. This act shall take effect on the thirtieth day after it shall

have become a law; provided, however, that section two of this act shall

take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall have become a law.

Effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any

rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of this act on

its effective date are authorized to be made and completed on or before such effective date.

## VIEW LESS V

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