

RESOLUTION # 25

INVASIVE PESTS AND THE PHILLIP ALAMPI BENEFICIAL INSECT LABORATORY

1 **WHEREAS**, the increasingly globalized nature of the world's economy means more
2 goods are imported to, and exported from, the United States, with many of them arriving via
3 ship or air transport; and

4 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey is both home to, and is surrounded by states that have,
5 numerous large commercial ports; and

6 **WHEREAS**, requirements for shipping containers and packaging vary throughout the
7 world, and can result in insects and diseases not native to the United States arriving in the
8 containers and packaging of goods, often concealed in packing materials; and

9 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey must be prepared to detect, control, and eradicate foreign
10 invasive pests that could cause severe damage to the state's agricultural crops, livestock,
11 pets and wooded areas; and

12 **WHEREAS**, 2017-18 saw the first-ever arrivals in New Jersey of the exotic
13 Longhorned Tick and the Spotted Lanternfly, both invasive pests; and

14 **WHEREAS**, the Spotted Lanternfly (SLF) is the subject of quarantines in multiple
15 New Jersey counties, as the Department aims to combat its spread; and

16 **WHEREAS**, the SLF in particular can cause significant damage to a number of high-
17 value agricultural crops, and is the subject of a current cooperative effort between the
18 Department and the USDA to prevent the SLF's spread in the state, with the ultimate goal of
19 eradicating it; and

20 **WHEREAS**, the cooperative effort with USDA has resulted in \$1.3 million in federal
21 funding coming to New Jersey to help stop the SLF, and the Department's Division of Plant
22 Industry estimates that it needs at least double that amount in federal funding to successfully
23 battle the SLF; and

24 **WHEREAS**, the Division needs additional tools that would help enact preventive-
25 treatment agreements outside of quarantine zones and to expedite judicial orders for those

26 property owners within quarantine zones who refuse to allow treatments on their properties;
27 and

28 **WHEREAS**, the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture has instituted quarantines to
29 assist in detecting and eradicating the SLF in multiple counties, especially those bordering
30 Pennsylvania, which has the nation's largest documented population of Spotted Lanternflies,
31 and which has instituted quarantines in 13 counties to try to control the spread of the SLF;
32 and

33 **WHEREAS**, governments at all levels are aware of the concerns of some members
34 of the public regarding chemical pesticides, and New Jersey in particular is sensitive to the
35 desire of residents to attack pests through biological methods whenever the use of chemicals
36 can be avoided; and

37 **WHEREAS**, in order to facilitate biological pest-control methods, New Jersey in 1985
38 established the Phillip Alampi Beneficial Insect Laboratory (PABIL) within its Division of Plant
39 Industry to breed effective predator insects and other life forms that attack and kill invasive
40 pests; and

41 **WHEREAS**, methods created at PABIL that have been successful in attacking
42 invasive pests include predatory wasps that kill Mexican bean beetle, the Derodontidae
43 beetle that feeds on hemlock woolly adelgid, and fungi released into the environment that kill
44 gypsy moth caterpillars by invading their digestive tracts and stopping them from eating; and

45 **WHEREAS**, the heating, ventilation and air conditioning system at PABIL is in need
46 of a significant upgrade if the breeding rooms at PABIL are to operate efficiently and
47 effectively, and those repairs require \$3.5 million in funding; and

48 **WHEREAS**, pending bills in the New Jersey Legislature would create an "Invasive
49 Species Task Force" to control the entry and spread of new invasive species into the state;
50 and

51 **WHEREAS**, the Task Force, under the pending legislation, would be charged in part
52 to "prepare a comprehensive invasive species management plan for the State," which would

53 include identifying which species it will consider to be invasive; and

54 **WHEREAS**, that process, under previous task forces and councils charged with
55 creating such a plan, has been challenging because certain non-native species grown by
56 New Jersey nursery producers were listed, although they had not proven previously to be a
57 threat for invasive growth; and

58 **WHEREAS**, the pending Senate legislation to create the Task Force names the
59 Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) as the chair of the
60 Task Force, the Assembly version also adds the Secretary of Agriculture as a member and
61 co-chair.

62 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 106th State
63 Agricultural Convention, assembled through a virtual platform hosted in Trenton, New
64 Jersey, in accordance with COVID-19 pandemic recommendations, on February 17, 2021,
65 do hereby urge PABIL and the Division of Plant Industry to continue working to develop
66 biological controls of both invasive and native pests that do harm to agricultural crops,
67 wooded lands and ecosystems.

68 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Legislature to pass, and the
69 Governor to sign, legislation that will provide the Department the necessary funding, at least
70 \$3.5 million, needed to fund repairs of the HVAC system at PABIL in order to allow the
71 facility to operate optimally, and that we urge that we urge the New Jersey Congressional
72 Delegation to advocate for additional federal funding and additional tools to support PABIL's
73 mission, as its work often benefits surrounding states that do not have similar facilities of
74 their own.

75 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that should the legislation to create the Invasive
76 Species Task Force advance, we strongly urge that the Senate version of the bill be
77 amended to reflect the amendment in the Assembly version that names the Secretary of
78 Agriculture as the co-chairman of the Task Force.