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Overview

This bill would authorize the immediate withdrawal of land enrolled in a metropolitan agricultural preserve when a state agency or other governmental unit acquires the land in fee title or obtains an easement for the purpose of creating or expanding a public trail or park.

The legislature created the Metropolitan Agricultural Preserves Program in 1980 to retain farmland in the expanding Twin Cities metropolitan area. Participating agricultural landowners enter into restrictive covenants that generally prevent them from using the land for nonagricultural purposes. In exchange, these landowners receive lower property taxes, an exemption from certain special assessments, general protection from ordinances that would restrict normal farming practices, and other benefits.

In general, the agricultural-preserve covenant runs with the land and cannot be removed until eight years after the landowner officially initiates the removal.

Section

- 1** **Till expiration started.** Authorizes a state agency or governmental unit to initiate expiration of an agricultural preserve.
- 2** **Expiration for park and trail purposes.** Provides that an agricultural preserve expires immediately when the public entity purchases the property or acquires an easement for purposes of the public trail or park. The expiration would apply only to the portion of the

Section

preserve used for park or trail purposes. Requires the public entity to notify the preserve authority accordingly.

3 **Notice to others.** Conforming change.

4 **Effective date.** Provides that this act is effective the day following final enactment and applies to any agricultural preserve where the previously required eight-year termination period has not yet expired.