



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
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**VETO MESSAGE FROM THE
GOVERNOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
REGARDING HOUSE BILL 216 OF THE 2025 REGULAR SESSION**

I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under section 88 of the Kentucky Constitution, do hereby veto the following:

House Bill 216 of the 2025 Regular Session of the General Assembly in its entirety.

House Bill 216 allows conduct that has always been unethical and unlawful under the Executive Branch Ethics Code. In two separate Advisory Opinions issued to the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, the Executive Branch Ethics Commission has confirmed that KRS 11A.040(4) prohibits executive branch employees from accepting grants and loans from a program run by the agency they work for.¹ For good reason, this rule applies to all executive branch agencies and employees.

Contrary to that rule, House Bill 216 singles out employees from one state department, the Department of Agriculture, and permits them to apply for and accept grants and loans awarded by the same department they work for; as written, House Bill 216 would even allow employees who work directly on the grant and loan programs to select themselves. This puts farmers who are not department employees at an unfair disadvantage when competing with department employees for grants and loans. The bill is also retroactive to March 12, 2021, which raises concerns that these grants and loans may have been provided to department employees in the past, despite being unethical and unlawful.

Kentucky farmers and families deserve better.

For these reasons, I am vetoing House Bill 216.



This, the 19th day of March, 2025.

Andy Beshear

Andy Beshear
Governor

¹ Advisory Opinion 21-12 and Advisory Opinion 24-05.