

RESOLUTION # 1

HEMP

1 **WHEREAS**, hemp (*cannabis sativa*) was a major industrial crop grown in America
2 since the Colonial period, and was used for textiles, paper and rope, and continues to this
3 day to be used in fiberboard, construction materials, protein for both humans and livestock,
4 lubricating oils and energy-producing biomass; and

5 **WHEREAS**, hemp-based plastics, which biodegrade at a much faster rate than
6 petroleum-based plastics (which take hundreds to thousands of years to biodegrade in a
7 landfill), can be substituted for more traditional plastics in many, although not all, uses for
8 packaging, which would go far in reducing the amount of lesser-biodegradable plastics in
9 landfills and waterways, creating a sizeable market for hemp grown in New Jersey; and

10 **WHEREAS**, there exists significant interest among New Jersey farmers in growing
11 hemp as an alternative crop, as markets for products made from it continue to grow; and

12 **WHEREAS**, as of the enactment of the 2018 Farm Bill on December 20,
13 2018, hemp and its products have been removed from the Schedule I list of the Controlled
14 Substances Act and is no longer a controlled substance, although its closely related
15 botanical “cousin,” marijuana remains on the Schedule 1 list; and

16 **WHEREAS**, states, including New Jersey, have adopted industrial hemp laws, with
17 varying degrees of research, pilot programs and commercial production programs; and now
18 are amending their programs to comply with the federal law regarding the allowable
19 commercial production of hemp; and

20 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey has joined the list of states to authorize these programs,
21 with the signing by the Governor in November 2018 of the “New Jersey Industrial Hemp Pilot
22 Program,” which directed the Department of Agriculture to establish an industrial hemp
23 program to promote the research and cultivation of industrial hemp; and

24 **WHEREAS**, the Department of Agriculture has established a program to allow for the
25 cultivation and the testing of hemp to ensure that its THC content does not exceed 0.3

26 percent, as amounts over that level can cause the plant to be considered marijuana instead
27 of hemp; and

28 **WHEREAS**, there is considerable variability in the THC content of different varieties
29 of hemp plants, and it is dependent upon genetics, environment, seed set, flower maturity
30 and harvest time; and

31 **WHEREAS**, horticultural expertise is required to ensure that hemp production stays
32 within legal bounds and that the seeds being imported into the state to grow it fall within
33 those legal bounds; and

34 **WHEREAS**, the Department of Agriculture submitted to the USDA its plan for a hemp
35 program including testing for THC content, and the USDA has approved that plan, setting the
36 stage for the planting, cultivation and harvesting of hemp in New Jersey.

37 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 105th State
38 Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on February 5-6, 2020, do
39 hereby acknowledge the work of the Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign legislation
40 that provides opportunities for New Jersey farmers, through a program created by the
41 Department, to research, produce, process and market industrial hemp.

42 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we acknowledge the prompt work of the
43 Department to create the parameters of that program and submit it to USDA for approval,
44 including testing of seeds and the inspections of growing facilities by the Department's
45 Division of Plant Industry.

46 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Legislature and Governor to include
47 the necessary annual funding in the state budget to continue the Department's testing,
48 research and promotional work in furthering the industrial hemp industry in New Jersey.