ASSEMBLY COMMERCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION No. 192

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 12, 2025

The Assembly Commerce, Economic Development and Agriculture Committee reports favorably Assembly Resolution No. 192.

This resolution urges the Department of Agriculture to assist the New Jersey wine and grape industry in increasing the production and use of local grapes and fruits in the vinification of State wines.

For over 150 years, the New Jersey wine industry has generated high-quality wines, which have gained national and international acclaim. Currently, there are over 60 wineries in the State in the four designated American Viticultural Areas: Cape May Peninsula, Warren Hills AVA, Central Delaware Valley AVA, and the Outer Coastal Plain AVA. Annually, the wine and grape industry in New Jersey generates over $30 million in revenue. Wineries in the State contribute to the diversification of New Jersey's agricultural sector, offering agro-tourism opportunities while providing a value-added product.

The Department of Agriculture already administers a promotion and research fund for the wine and grape industry, which is supported by per gallon assessments collected by the New Jersey Wine Industry Advisory Council. This council prints educational materials, conducts publicity programs, funds promotional festivals and conducts varietal and production-oriented research with these funds. The department has also initiated a "Secretary Select" effort, to celebrate wines produced in the State. Thanks to these efforts to promote the New Jersey wine and grape industry, the State's wine industry ranks in the Top 10 in the nation in production.

Despite the expansion of grape generation in New Jersey, grape production is not keeping pace with increased demand for wine. Wineries often face significant challenges due to pests, disease, weather or other issues. With flexibility in the amounts and types of crops grown on the farms that are used in their wines, wineries could continue to generate the quality, locally-sourced wine products demanded by the State market. Therefore, it is imperative that New Jersey wineries and grape producers receive continued

and reinforced support from the Department of Agriculture in order to meet consumer demands and maintain the vitality of the State viticultural sector.