



324048

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate	.	House
Comm: RCS	.	
02/21/2018	.	
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	.	

Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Tourism, and Economic Development (Montford) recommended the following:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Delete everything after the enacting clause and insert:

Section 1. Subsections (1), (3), and (4) of section 288.018, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

288.018 Regional Rural Development Grants Program.—

(1) (a) The department shall establish a matching grant program to provide funding to regional ~~regionally based~~ economic development organizations representing rural counties and



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11 communities to build for the purpose of building the
12 professional capacity of such regional economic development
13 ~~their~~ organizations. Building the professional capacity of
14 regional economic development organizations includes hiring
15 professional staff to develop, facilitate the delivery of, and
16 directly provide needed economic development professional
17 services, including technical assistance, education and
18 leadership development, marketing and project recruitment, and
19 other services that are important for rural economic
20 development. ~~Such~~ Matching grants may also be used by a regional
21 ~~an~~ economic development organization to provide technical
22 assistance to local governments, local economic development
23 organizations, and existing and prospective businesses within
24 the rural counties and communities that it serves.

25 (b) A regional economic development organization may apply
26 to the department for a matching grant each year. The department
27 is authorized to approve an application for a grant up to, ~~on an~~
28 ~~annual basis, grants:~~

29 1. Fifty thousand dollars to a regional economic
30 development organization;

31 2. One hundred fifty thousand dollars to an organization
32 located to such regionally based economic development
33 ~~organizations. The maximum amount an organization may receive in~~
34 ~~any year will be \$50,000, or \$150,000 in a rural area of~~
35 opportunity designated pursuant to s. 288.0656; or

36 3. Two hundred fifty thousand dollars to any of the three
37 regional economic development organizations that serve an entire
38 region of a rural area of opportunity designated pursuant to s.
39 288.0656 and that are recognized by the department as serving



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40 such regions.

41 (c) Grant funds received by a regional economic development
42 organization recommended by the Rural Economic Development
43 Initiative and designated by the Governor, and must be matched
44 each year by an equivalent amount of nonstate resources in an
45 amount equal to 25 percent of the state contribution.

46 (3) (a) A contract or agreement that involves the
47 expenditure of grant funds provided under this section must be
48 placed on the contracting regional economic development
49 organization's website at least 14 days before execution.

50 (b) A contract or agreement that involves the expenditure
51 of grant funds provided under this section, including a contract
52 or agreement entered into between another entity and a regional
53 economic development organization, a unit of local government,
54 or an economic development organization substantially
55 underwritten by a unit of local government, must include:

- 56 1. The purpose of the contract or agreement.
57 2. Specific performance standards and responsibilities for
58 each entity.
59 3. A detailed project or contract budget, if applicable.
60 4. The value of any services provided.
61 5. The projected travel and entertainment expenses for
62 employees and board members, if applicable.

63 (c) A plain language version of a contract or agreement
64 with a private entity, a municipality, or a vendor of services,
65 supplies, or programs, including marketing, or for the purchase
66 or lease or use of lands, facilities, or properties which
67 involves the expenditure of grant funds provided under this
68 section and which is estimated to exceed \$35,000 must be posted



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69 on the contracting regional economic development organization's
70 website ~~The department may also contract for the development of~~
71 ~~an enterprise zone web portal or websites for each enterprise~~
72 ~~zone which will be used to market the program for job creation~~
73 ~~in disadvantaged urban and rural enterprise zones. Each~~
74 ~~enterprise zone web page should include downloadable links to~~
75 ~~state forms and information, as well as local message boards~~
76 ~~that help businesses and residents receive information~~
77 ~~concerning zone boundaries, job openings, zone programs, and~~
78 ~~neighborhood improvement activities.~~

79 (4) The department may expend up to \$1,000,000 ~~\$750,000~~
80 each fiscal year from funds appropriated to the Rural Community
81 Development Revolving Loan Fund for the purposes outlined in
82 this section. The department may contract with Enterprise
83 Florida, Inc., for the administration of the purposes specified
84 in this section. Funds released to Enterprise Florida, Inc., for
85 this purpose shall be released quarterly and shall be calculated
86 based on the applications in process.

87 Section 2. Subsection (5) of section 288.0655, Florida
88 Statutes, is redesignated as subsection (6), paragraph (b) of
89 subsection (2) and subsection (4) of that section are amended,
90 and a new subsection (5) is added to that section, to read:

91 288.0655 Rural Infrastructure Fund.—

92 (2) (b) To facilitate access of rural communities and rural
93 areas of opportunity as defined by the Rural Economic
94 Development Initiative to infrastructure funding programs of the
95 Federal Government, such as those offered by the United States
96 Department of Agriculture and the United States Department of
97 Commerce, and state programs, including those offered by Rural



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98 Economic Development Initiative agencies, and to facilitate
99 local government or private infrastructure funding efforts, the
100 department may award grants for up to 50 ~~30~~ percent of the total
101 infrastructure project cost. ~~If an application for funding is~~
102 ~~for a catalyst site, as defined in s. 288.0656, the department~~
103 ~~may award grants for up to 40 percent of the total~~
104 ~~infrastructure project cost.~~ Eligible projects must be related
105 to specific job-creation or job-retention opportunities.
106 Eligible projects may also include improving any inadequate
107 infrastructure that has resulted in regulatory action that
108 prohibits economic or community growth or reducing the costs to
109 community users of proposed infrastructure improvements that
110 exceed such costs in comparable communities, which includes
111 improving access to and the availability of broadband Internet
112 service. Eligible uses of funds shall include improvements to
113 public infrastructure for industrial or commercial sites, and
114 upgrades to or development of public tourism infrastructure, and
115 improvements to broadband Internet service and access in
116 unserved or underserved rural communities. Improvements to
117 broadband Internet service and access must be conducted through
118 a partnership or partnerships with one or more dealers of
119 communications services, as defined in s. 202.11(2), and the
120 partnership must be established by a publicly noticed and
121 competitively selected process. Authorized infrastructure may
122 include the following public or public-private partnership
123 facilities: storm water systems; telecommunications facilities;
124 broadband facilities; roads or other remedies to transportation
125 impediments; nature-based tourism facilities; or other physical
126 requirements necessary to facilitate tourism, trade, and



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127 economic development activities in the community. Authorized
128 infrastructure may also include publicly or privately owned
129 self-powered nature-based tourism facilities, publicly owned
130 telecommunications facilities, and broadband facilities, and
131 additions to the distribution facilities of the existing natural
132 gas utility as defined in s. 366.04(3)(c), the existing electric
133 utility as defined in s. 366.02, or the existing water or
134 wastewater utility as defined in s. 367.021(12), or any other
135 existing water or wastewater facility, which owns a gas or
136 electric distribution system or a water or wastewater system in
137 this state where:

138 1. A contribution-in-aid of construction is required to
139 serve public or public-private partnership facilities under the
140 tariffs of any natural gas, electric, water, or wastewater
141 utility as defined herein; and

142 2. Such utilities as defined herein are willing and able to
143 provide such service.

144 (4) By September 1, 2019 ~~2012~~, the department shall, in
145 consultation with the organizations listed in subsection (3),
146 and other organizations, reevaluate existing guidelines and
147 criteria governing submission of applications for funding,
148 review and evaluation of such applications, and approval of
149 funding under this section. The department shall consider
150 factors including, but not limited to, the project's potential
151 for enhanced job creation or increased capital investment, the
152 demonstration and level of local public and private commitment,
153 whether the project is located ~~in an enterprise zone~~, in a
154 community development corporation service area, or in an urban
155 high-crime area as designated under s. 212.097, the unemployment



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156 rate of the county in which the project would be located, and
157 the poverty rate of the community.

158 (5) (a) A contract or agreement that involves the
159 expenditure of grant funds provided under this section must be
160 placed on the department's website at least 14 days before
161 execution.

162 (b) A contract or agreement that includes the expenditure
163 of grant funds provided under this section, including a contract
164 or agreement entered into between an entity and a regional
165 economic development organization, a unit of local government,
166 or an economic development organization substantially
167 underwritten by a unit of local government, must include:

- 168 1. The purpose of the contract or agreement.
169 2. Specific performance standards and responsibilities for
170 each entity.
171 3. A detailed project or contract budget, if applicable.
172 4. The value of any services provided.
173 5. The projected travel and entertainment expenses for
174 employees and board members, if applicable.

175 (c) A plain language version of a contract or agreement
176 with a private entity, a municipality, or a vendor of services,
177 supplies, or programs, including marketing, or for the purchase
178 or lease or use of lands, facilities, or properties which
179 involves the expenditure of grant funds provided under this
180 section and which is estimated to exceed \$35,000 must be posted
181 on the department's website.

182 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2018.

183
184 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====



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185 And the title is amended as follows:

186 Delete everything before the enacting clause
187 and insert:

188 A bill to be entitled

189 An act relating to regional rural development grants;
190 amending s. 288.018, F.S.; providing that regional
191 rural development grants may be used to hire regional
192 economic development organization professional staff;
193 authorizing the use of matching grant funds to provide
194 technical assistance to certain entities; increasing
195 the annual maximum amount of grant funding that
196 specified economic development organizations may
197 receive; revising the amount of nonstate matching
198 funds required; increasing the amount the Department
199 of Economic Opportunity may expend each fiscal year
200 for the program; requiring that contracts or
201 agreements involving the expenditure of grant funds be
202 placed on a certain website for a specified time
203 period; requiring that certain information be included
204 in a contract or agreement involving the expenditure
205 of grant funds; requiring that a plain language
206 version of certain contracts or agreements be placed
207 on a certain website; deleting an obsolete provision
208 authorizing the Department of Economic Opportunity to
209 contract for the development of certain enterprise
210 zone web portals or websites; amending s. 288.0655,
211 F.S.; increasing the maximum percent of total
212 infrastructure project costs for which the department
213 may award a grant; repealing a provision for increased



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214 maximum percent of total infrastructure project costs
215 that may be awarded for a catalyst site; providing
216 that improving access to and availability of broadband
217 Internet service may be included in a project that is
218 eligible for rural infrastructure grant funds;
219 providing that grants for improvements to broadband
220 Internet service and access must be conducted through
221 certain partnerships; extending the date by which the
222 department is required to reevaluate certain
223 guidelines and criteria; requiring that contracts or
224 agreements involving the expenditure of grant funds be
225 placed on a certain website for a specified time
226 period; requiring that certain information be included
227 in a contract or agreement involving the expenditure
228 of grant funds; requiring that a plain language
229 version of certain contracts or agreements be placed
230 on a certain website; providing an effective date.