

Bill No. CS for CS for SB 1566

Amendment No. ____

<u>Senate</u>	CHAMBER ACTION	<u>House</u>
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11 Senator Kirkpatrick moved the following amendment:

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13 **Senate Amendment (with title amendment)**

14 On page 163, between lines 24 and 25,

15
16 insert:

17 Section 62. Legislative intent.--

18 (1) The Legislature finds and declares that because of
19 climate, tourism, industrialization, technological advances,
20 federal and state government policies, transportation, and
21 migration, Florida's urban communities have grown rapidly over
22 the past 40 years. This growth and prosperity, however, have
23 not been shared by Florida's rural communities, although they
24 are the stewards of the vast majority of the land and natural
25 resources. Without this land and these resources, the state's
26 growth and prosperity cannot continue. In short, successful
27 rural communities are essential to the overall success of the
28 state's economy.

29 (2) The Legislature further finds and declares that
30 many rural areas of the state are experiencing not only a lack
31 of growth, but severe and sustained economic distress. Median

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1 household incomes are significantly less than the state's
2 median household income level. Job creation rates trail those
3 in more urbanized areas. In many cases, rural counties have
4 lost jobs, which handicaps local economies and drains wealth
5 from these communities. These and other factors, including
6 government policies, amplify and compound social, health, and
7 community problems, making job creation and economic
8 development even more difficult. Moreover, the Legislature
9 finds that traditional program and service delivery is often
10 hampered by the necessarily rigid structure of the programs
11 themselves and the lack of local resources.

12 (3) It is the intent of the Legislature to provide for
13 the most efficient and effective delivery of programs of
14 assistance and support to rural communities, including the
15 use, where appropriate, of regulatory flexibility through
16 multiagency coordination and adequate funding. Therefore, the
17 Legislature determines and declares that the provisions of
18 this act fulfill an important state interest.

19 Section 63. Paragraph (a) of subsection (6) of section
20 163.3177, Florida Statutes, 1998 Supplement, is amended to
21 read:

22 163.3177 Required and optional elements of
23 comprehensive plan; studies and surveys.--

24 (6) In addition to the requirements of subsections
25 (1)-(5), the comprehensive plan shall include the following
26 elements:

27 (a) A future land use plan element designating
28 proposed future general distribution, location, and extent of
29 the uses of land for residential uses, commercial uses,
30 industry, agriculture, recreation, conservation, education,
31 public buildings and grounds, other public facilities, and

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1 other categories of the public and private uses of land. The
2 future land use plan shall include standards to be followed in
3 the control and distribution of population densities and
4 building and structure intensities. The proposed
5 distribution, location, and extent of the various categories
6 of land use shall be shown on a land use map or map series
7 which shall be supplemented by goals, policies, and measurable
8 objectives. Each land use category shall be defined in terms
9 of the types of uses included and specific standards for the
10 density or intensity of use. The future land use plan shall
11 be based upon surveys, studies, and data regarding the area,
12 including the amount of land required to accommodate
13 anticipated growth; the projected population of the area; the
14 character of undeveloped land; the availability of public
15 services; ~~and~~ the need for redevelopment, including the
16 renewal of blighted areas and the elimination of nonconforming
17 uses which are inconsistent with the character of the
18 community; and, in rural communities, the need for job
19 creation, capital investment, and economic development that
20 will strengthen and diversify the community's economy. The
21 future land use plan may designate areas for future planned
22 development use involving combinations of types of uses for
23 which special regulations may be necessary to ensure
24 development in accord with the principles and standards of the
25 comprehensive plan and this act. In addition, for rural
26 communities, the amount of land designated for future planned
27 industrial use shall be based upon surveys and studies that
28 reflect the need for job creation, capital investment, and the
29 necessity to strengthen and diversify the local economies, and
30 shall not be limited solely by the projected population of the
31 rural community.The future land use plan of a county may also

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1 designate areas for possible future municipal incorporation.
2 The land use maps or map series shall generally identify and
3 depict historic district boundaries and shall designate
4 historically significant properties meriting protection. The
5 future land use element must clearly identify the land use
6 categories in which public schools are an allowable use. When
7 delineating the land use categories in which public schools
8 are an allowable use, a local government shall include in the
9 categories sufficient land proximate to residential
10 development to meet the projected needs for schools in
11 coordination with public school boards and may establish
12 differing criteria for schools of different type or size.
13 Each local government shall include lands contiguous to
14 existing school sites, to the maximum extent possible, within
15 the land use categories in which public schools are an
16 allowable use. All comprehensive plans must comply with this
17 paragraph no later than October 1, 1999, or the deadline for
18 the local government evaluation and appraisal report,
19 whichever occurs first. The failure by a local government to
20 comply with this requirement will result in the prohibition of
21 the local government's ability to amend the local
22 comprehensive plan as provided by s. 163.3187(6). An amendment
23 proposed by a local government for purposes of identifying the
24 land use categories in which public schools are an allowable
25 use is exempt from the limitation on the frequency of plan
26 amendments contained in s. 163.3187. The future land use
27 element shall include criteria which encourage the location of
28 schools proximate to urban residential areas to the extent
29 possible and shall require that the local government seek to
30 collocate public facilities, such as parks, libraries, and
31 community centers, with schools to the extent possible.

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1 Section 64. Subsection (5) is added to section
2 186.502, Florida Statutes, to read:

3 186.502 Legislative findings; public purpose.--

4 (5) The regional planning council shall have a duty to
5 assist local governments with activities designed to promote
6 and facilitate economic development in the geographic area
7 covered by the council.

8 Section 65. Subsection (4) of section 186.504, Florida
9 Statutes, is amended to read:

10 186.504 Regional planning councils; creation;
11 membership.--

12 (4) In addition to voting members appointed pursuant
13 to paragraph (2)(c), the Governor shall appoint the following
14 ex officio nonvoting members to each regional planning
15 council:

16 (a) A representative of the Department of
17 Transportation.

18 (b) A representative of the Department of
19 Environmental Protection.

20 (c) A representative nominated by Enterprise Florida,
21 Inc., and the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic
22 Development of the Department of Commerce.

23 (d) A representative of the appropriate water
24 management district or districts.

25
26 The Governor may also appoint ex officio nonvoting members
27 representing appropriate metropolitan planning organizations
28 and regional water supply authorities.

29 Section 66. Subsection (25) is added to section
30 186.505, Florida Statutes, to read:

31 186.505 Regional planning councils; powers and

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1 duties.--Any regional planning council created hereunder shall
2 have the following powers:

3 (25) To use personnel, consultants, or technical or
4 professional assistants of the council to help local
5 governments within the geographic area covered by the council
6 conduct economic development activities.

7 Section 67. Subsections (1) and (3) of section
8 288.018, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

9 288.018 Regional Rural Development Grants Program.--

10 (1) The Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic
11 Development shall establish a matching grant program to
12 provide funding to regionally based economic development
13 organizations representing rural counties and communities for
14 the purpose of building the professional capacity of their
15 organizations. The Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic
16 Development is authorized to approve, on an annual basis,
17 grants to such regionally based economic development
18 organizations. The maximum amount an organization may receive
19 in any year will be \$35,000, or \$100,000 in a rural area of
20 critical economic concern recommended by the Rural Economic
21 Development Initiative and designated by the Governor, ~~\$20,000~~
22 and must be matched each year by an equivalent amount of
23 nonstate resources.

24 (3) The Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic
25 Development may expend up to \$600,000 ~~\$100,000~~ each fiscal
26 year from funds appropriated to the Rural Community
27 Development Revolving Loan Fund for the purposes outlined in
28 this section.

29 Section 68. Subsection (2) of section 288.065, Florida
30 Statutes, is amended to read:

31 288.065 Rural Community Development Revolving Loan

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1 Fund.--

2 (2) The program shall provide for long-term loans,
3 loan guarantees, and loan loss reserves to units of local
4 governments within counties with populations of 75,000 or less
5 ~~than 50,000~~, or any county that has a population of 100,000 or
6 less and is contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000
7 or less than 50,000, as determined by the most recent official
8 estimate pursuant to s. 186.901, residing in incorporated and
9 unincorporated areas of the county. Requests for loans shall
10 be made by application to the Office of Tourism, Trade, and
11 Economic Development. Loans shall be made pursuant to
12 agreements specifying the terms and conditions agreed to
13 between the local government and the Office of Tourism, Trade,
14 and Economic Development. The loans shall be the legal
15 obligations of the local government. All repayments of
16 principal and interest shall be returned to the loan fund and
17 made available for loans to other applicants. However, in a
18 rural area of critical economic concern designated by the
19 Governor, and upon approval by the Office of Tourism, Trade,
20 and Economic Development, repayments of principal and interest
21 may be retained by a unit of local government if such
22 repayments are dedicated and matched to fund regionally based
23 economic development organizations representing the rural area
24 of critical economic concern.

25 Section 69. Section 288.0655, Florida Statutes, is
26 created to read:

27 288.0655 Rural Infrastructure Fund.--

28 (1) There is created within the Office of Tourism,
29 Trade, and Economic Development the Rural Infrastructure Fund
30 to facilitate the planning, preparing, and financing of
31 infrastructure projects in rural communities which will

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1 encourage job creation, capital investment, and the
2 strengthening and diversification of rural economies by
3 promoting tourism, trade, and economic development.

4 (2) On July 1, 1999, and annually thereafter, \$8
5 million shall be deposited in the Economic Development Trust
6 Fund, as provided in s. 320.20(5), solely for the purpose of
7 funding the Rural Infrastructure Fund.

8 (3)(a) Funds under this section shall be distributed
9 by the office through a grant program that maximizes the use
10 of federal, local, and private resources, including, but not
11 limited to, those available under the Small Cities Community
12 Development Block Grant Program.

13 (b) To facilitate access of rural communities and
14 rural areas of critical economic concern as defined by the
15 Rural Economic Development Initiative to infrastructure
16 funding programs of the Federal Government, such as those
17 offered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S.
18 Department of Commerce, the office may award grants to
19 applicants for such federal programs for up to 30 percent of
20 the total infrastructure project cost. Eligible projects must
21 be related to specific job-creating opportunities. Eligible
22 uses of funds shall include improvements to public
23 infrastructure for industrial or commercial sites and upgrades
24 to or development of public tourism infrastructure. Authorized
25 infrastructure may include the following public or
26 public-private partnership facilities: storm water systems;
27 telecommunications facilities; roads or other remedies to
28 transportation impediments; nature-based tourism facilities;
29 or other physical requirements necessary to facilitate
30 tourism, trade, and economic development activities in the
31 community. Authorized infrastructure may also include

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1 publicly-owned self-powered nature-based tourism facilities
2 and additions to the distribution facilities of the existing
3 natural gas utility as defined in s. 366.04(3)(c), the
4 existing electric utility as defined in s. 366.02, or the
5 existing water or wastewater utility as defined in s.
6 367.021(12), or any other existing water or wastewater
7 facility, which owns a gas or electric distribution system or
8 a water or wastewater system in this state where:

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

13 2. Such utilities as defined herein are willing and
14 able to provide such service.

15 (c) To facilitate timely response and induce the
16 location or expansion of specific job creating opportunities,
17 the office may award grants for infrastructure feasibility
18 studies, design and engineering activities, or other
19 infrastructure planning and preparation activities. Authorized
20 grants shall be up to \$50,000 for an employment project with a
21 business committed to create at least 100 jobs, up to \$150,000
22 for an employment project with a business committed to create
23 at least 300 jobs, and up to \$300,000 for a project in a rural
24 area of critical economic concern. Grants awarded under this
25 paragraph may be used in conjunction with grants awarded under
26 paragraph (b), provided that the total amount of both grants
27 does not exceed 30 percent of the total project cost. In
28 evaluating applications under this paragraph, the office shall
29 consider the extent to which the application seeks to minimize
30 administrative and consultant expenses.

31 (d) By September 1, 1999, the office shall pursue

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1 execution of a memorandum of agreement with the U.S.
2 Department of Agriculture under which state funds available
3 through the Rural Infrastructure Fund may be advanced, in
4 excess of the prescribed state share, for a project that has
5 received from the department a preliminary determination of
6 eligibility for federal financial support. State funds in
7 excess of the prescribed state share which are advanced
8 pursuant to this paragraph and the memorandum of agreement
9 shall be reimbursed when funds are awarded under an
10 application for federal funding.

11 (e) To enable local governments to access the
12 resources available pursuant to s. 403.973(16), the office may
13 award grants for surveys, feasibility studies, and other
14 activities related to the identification and preclearance
15 review of land which is suitable for preclearance review.
16 Authorized grants under this paragraph shall not exceed
17 \$75,000 each, except in the case of a project in a rural area
18 of critical economic concern, in which case the grant shall
19 not exceed \$300,000. Any funds awarded under this paragraph
20 must be matched at a level of 50 percent with local funds,
21 except that any funds awarded for a project in a rural area of
22 critical economic concern must be matched at a level of 33
23 percent with local funds. In evaluating applications under
24 this paragraph, the office shall consider the extent to which
25 the application seeks to minimize administrative and
26 consultant expenses.

27 (4) The office, in consultation with Enterprise
28 Florida, Inc., VISIT Florida, the Department of Environmental
29 Protection, and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation
30 Commission, as appropriate, shall review applications and
31 evaluate the economic benefit of the projects and their

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1 long-term viability. The office shall have final approval for
2 any grant under this section and must make a grant decision
3 within 30 days of receiving a completed application.

4 (5) By September 1, 1999, the office shall, in
5 consultation with the organizations listed in subsection (4),
6 and other organizations, develop guidelines and criteria
7 governing submission of applications for funding, review and
8 evaluation of such applications, and approval of funding under
9 this section. The office shall consider factors including, but
10 not limited to, the project's potential for enhanced job
11 creation or increased capital investment, the demonstration of
12 local public and private commitment, the location of the
13 project in an enterprise zone, the location of the project in
14 a community development corporation service area as defined in
15 s. 290.035(2), the location of the project in a county
16 designated under s. 212.097, the unemployment rate of the
17 surrounding area, and the poverty rate of the community.

18 (6) Notwithstanding the provisions of s. 216.301,
19 funds appropriated for the purposes of this section shall not
20 be subject to reversion.

21 Section 70. Present subsection (5) of section 320.20,
22 Florida Statutes, is redesignated as subsection (6) and a new
23 subsection (5) is added to that section to read:

24 320.20 Disposition of license tax moneys.--The revenue
25 derived from the registration of motor vehicles, including any
26 delinquent fees and excluding those revenues collected and
27 distributed under the provisions of s. 320.081, must be
28 distributed monthly, as collected, as follows:

29 (5) Notwithstanding any other provision of law except
30 subsections (1), (2), (3), and (4), on July 1, 1999, and
31 annually thereafter, \$8 million shall be deposited in the

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1 Economic Development Trust Fund under s. 288.095, solely for
2 the purposes of funding the Rural Infrastructure Fund under s.
3 288.0655. Such revenues may be assigned, pledged, or set aside
4 as a trust for the payment of principal or interest on bonds,
5 grant anticipation notes, variable rate demand obligations,
6 including, but not limited to, tax exempt commercial paper and
7 derivative instruments, or any other form of indebtedness, or
8 used to purchase credit support to permit such borrowings,
9 issued by a governing body under s. 163.01(7)(d), or
10 appropriate local government having jurisdiction thereof, or
11 collectively by interlocal agreement among any applicable
12 government; however, such debt shall not constitute a general
13 obligation of the State of Florida. The state does hereby
14 covenant with holders of such revenue bonds or other
15 instruments of indebtedness issued hereunder that it will not
16 repeal or impair or amend in any manner that will materially
17 and adversely affect the rights of such holders so long as
18 bonds authorized by this subsection are outstanding. Any
19 revenues which are not pledged to the repayment of bonds as
20 authorized by this subsection may be utilized for purposes
21 authorized under the Rural Infrastructure Fund. The Office of
22 Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development shall approve
23 distribution of funds for rural infrastructure related to
24 tourism, trade, and economic development. The office and the
25 Department of Transportation are authorized to perform such
26 acts as are required to facilitate and implement the
27 provisions of this subsection. To better enable the counties
28 and the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development to
29 cooperate to their mutual advantage, the governing body of
30 each government may exercise powers provided to municipalities
31 or counties in s. 163.01(7)(d). The use of funds provided

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1 under this subsection is limited to eligible projects listed
2 in s. 288.0655. Unexpended proceeds derived from a project
3 completed with the use of program funds, beyond operating
4 costs and debt service, shall be restricted to further capital
5 improvements consistent with tourism, trade, and economic
6 development infrastructure purposes and for no other purpose.
7 Use of such unexpended proceeds for purposes other than
8 tourism, trade, and economic development infrastructure is
9 prohibited. Any funds deposited in the Economic Development
10 Trust Fund for the purposes of the Rural Infrastructure Fund
11 under s. 288.0655 shall not be diverted to any other purpose.
12 Any such diversion shall trigger immediate repayment to the
13 Economic Development Trust Fund from the Working Capital Trust
14 Fund.

15 Section 71. Rural Economic Development Initiative.--

16 (1) The Rural Economic Development Initiative, known
17 as "REDI," is created within the Office of Tourism, Trade, and
18 Economic Development, and the participation of state and
19 regional agencies in this initiative is authorized.

20 (2) As used in this section, the term:

21 (a) "Economic distress" means conditions affecting the
22 fiscal and economic viability of a rural community, including
23 such factors as low per capita income, low per capita taxable
24 values, high unemployment, high underemployment, low weekly
25 earned wages compared to the state average, low housing values
26 compared to the state average, high percentages of the
27 population receiving public assistance, high poverty levels
28 compared to the state average, and a lack of year-round stable
29 employment opportunities.

30 (b) "Rural community" means:

31 1. A county with a population of 75,000 or less.

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1 2. A county with a population of 100,000 or less that
2 is contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000 or less.

3 3. A municipality within a county described in
4 subparagraph 1. or subparagraph 2.

5 4. An unincorporated federal enterprise community or
6 an incorporated rural city with a population of 25,000 or less
7 and an employment base focused on traditional agricultural or
8 resource-based industries, located in a county not defined as
9 rural, which has at least three or more of the economic
10 distress factors identified in paragraph (2)(a) and verified
11 by the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development.

12
13 For purposes of this paragraph, population shall be determined
14 in accordance with the most recent official estimate pursuant
15 to section 186.901, Florida Statutes.

16 (3) REDI shall be responsible for coordinating and
17 focusing the efforts and resources of state and regional
18 agencies on the problems which affect the fiscal, economic,
19 and community viability of Florida's economically distressed
20 rural communities, working with local governments,
21 community-based organizations, and private organizations that
22 have an interest in the growth and development of these
23 communities to find ways to balance environmental and growth
24 management issues with local needs.

25 (4) REDI shall review and evaluate the impact of
26 statutes and rules on rural communities and shall work to
27 minimize any adverse impact.

28 (5) REDI shall facilitate better access to state
29 resources by promoting direct access and referrals to
30 appropriate state and regional agencies and statewide
31 organizations. REDI may undertake outreach, capacity-building,

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1 and other advocacy efforts to improve conditions in rural
 2 communities. These activities may include sponsorship of
 3 conferences and achievement awards.

4 (6)(a) No later than August 1, 1999, the head of each
 5 of the following agencies and organizations shall designate a
 6 high-level staff person from within the agency or organization
 7 to serve as the REDI representative for the agency or
 8 organization:

- 9 1. The Department of Community Affairs.
- 10 2. The Department of Transportation.
- 11 3. The Department of Environmental Protection.
- 12 4. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer
 13 Services.
- 14 5. The Department of State.
- 15 6. The Department of Health.
- 16 7. The Department of Children and Family Services.
- 17 8. The Department of Corrections.
- 18 9. The Department of Labor and Employment Security.
- 19 10. The Department of Education.
- 20 11. The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.
- 21 12. Each water management district.
- 22 13. Enterprise Florida, Inc.
- 23 14. The Florida Commission on Tourism or VISIT
 24 Florida.
- 25 15. The Florida Regional Planning Council Association.
- 26 16. The Florida State Rural Development Council.
- 27 17. The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

28 (IFAS).

29
 30 An alternate for each designee shall also be chosen, and the
 31 names of the designees and alternates shall be sent to the

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1 director of the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic
2 Development.

3 (b) Each REDI representative must have comprehensive
4 knowledge of his or her agency's functions, both regulatory
5 and service in nature, and of the state's economic goals,
6 policies, and programs. This person shall be the primary point
7 of contact for his or her agency with REDI on issues and
8 projects relating to economically distressed rural communities
9 and with regard to expediting project review, shall ensure a
10 prompt effective response to problems arising with regard to
11 rural issues, and shall work closely with the other REDI
12 representatives in the identification of opportunities for
13 preferential awards of program funds and allowances and waiver
14 of program requirements when necessary to encourage and
15 facilitate long-term private capital investment and job
16 creation.

17 (c) The REDI representatives shall work with REDI in
18 the review and evaluation of statutes and rules for adverse
19 impact on rural communities and the development of alternative
20 proposals to mitigate that impact.

21 (d) Each REDI representative shall be responsible for
22 ensuring that each district office or facility of his or her
23 agency is informed about the Rural Economic Development
24 Initiative and for providing assistance throughout the agency
25 in the implementation of REDI activities.

26 (7) REDI may recommend to the Governor up to three
27 rural areas of critical economic concern. A rural area of
28 critical economic concern must be a rural community, or a
29 region composed of such, that has been adversely affected by
30 an extraordinary economic event or a natural disaster or that
31 presents a unique economic development opportunity of regional

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1 impact that will create more than 1,000 jobs over a 5-year
2 period. The Governor may by executive order designate up to
3 three rural areas of critical economic concern which will
4 establish these areas as priority assignments for REDI as well
5 as to allow the Governor, acting through REDI, to:

6 (a) Waive criteria, requirements, or similar
7 provisions of any economic development incentive. Such
8 incentives shall include, but not be limited to: the Qualified
9 Target Industry Tax Refund Program under section 288.106,
10 Florida Statutes, the Quick Response Training Program under
11 section 288.047, Florida Statutes, the WAGES Quick Response
12 Training Program under section 288.047(10), Florida Statutes,
13 transportation projects under section 288.063, Florida
14 Statutes, the brownfield redevelopment bonus refund under
15 section 288.107, Florida Statutes, and the rural job tax
16 credit program under sections 212.098 and 220.1895, Florida
17 Statutes.

18 (b) Waive agency rules to empower the agency to commit
19 and coordinate their resources, staff, or assistance to these
20 rural communities, as well as to suspend procedural
21 requirements of law that do not compromise the public's
22 health, safety, or welfare.

23 (c) Provide rapid response assistance, training
24 services, and educational opportunities for employees; develop
25 training programs; and pay tuition or training expenses for
26 employees from resources coordinated by the Workforce
27 Development Board.

28 (d) Commit the resources or benefits of the Rural
29 Community Development Revolving Loan Fund under section
30 288.065, Florida Statutes, the Regional Rural Grants Program
31 under section 288.018, Florida Statutes, the rural job tax

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1 credit program under sections 212.098 and 220.1895, Florida
2 Statutes, and the federal Community Development Block Grant
3 Program.

4 (e) Direct the assignment of staffing and resources
5 from Enterprise Florida, Inc.

6
7 Designation as a rural area of critical economic concern under
8 this subsection shall be contingent upon the execution of a
9 memorandum of agreement among the Office of Tourism, Trade,
10 and Economic Development, the governing body of the county,
11 and the governing bodies of any municipalities to be included
12 within a rural area of critical economic concern. Such
13 agreement shall specify the terms and conditions of the
14 designation, including, but not limited to, the duties and
15 responsibilities of the county and any participating
16 municipalities to take actions designed to facilitate the
17 retention and expansion of existing businesses in the area, as
18 well as the recruitment of new businesses to the area.

19 (8) REDI shall submit a report to the Governor, the
20 President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of
21 Representatives each year on or before February 1 on all REDI
22 activities. This report shall include a status report on all
23 projects currently being coordinated through REDI, the number
24 of preferential awards and allowances made pursuant to this
25 section, the dollar amount of such awards, and the names of
26 the recipients. The report shall also include a description of
27 all waivers of program requirements granted. The report shall
28 also include information as to the economic impact of the
29 projects coordinated by REDI.

30 Section 72. Florida rural economic development
31 strategy grants.--

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1 (1) As used in this section, the term "rural
2 community" means:

3 (a) A county with a population of 75,000 or less.

4 (b) A county with a population of 100,000 or less that
5 is contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000 or less.

6 (c) A municipality within a county described in
7 paragraph (a) or paragraph (b).

8
9 For purposes of this subsection, population shall be
10 determined in accordance with the most recent official
11 estimate pursuant to section 186.901, Florida Statutes.

12 (2) The Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic
13 Development may accept and administer moneys appropriated to
14 the office for providing grants to assist rural communities to
15 develop and implement strategic economic development plans.

16 (3) A rural community, an economic development
17 organization in a rural area, or a regional organization
18 representing at least one rural community or such economic
19 development organizations may apply for such grants.

20 (4) Enterprise Florida, Inc., and VISIT Florida, shall
21 establish criteria for reviewing grant applications. These
22 criteria shall include, but are not limited to, the degree of
23 participation and commitment by the local community and the
24 application's consistency with local comprehensive plans or
25 the application's proposal to ensure such consistency. The
26 International Trade and Economic Development Board of
27 Enterprise Florida, Inc., and VISIT Florida, shall review each
28 application for a grant and shall submit annually to the
29 office for approval a list of all applications that are
30 recommended by the board and VISIT Florida, arranged in order
31 of priority. The office may approve grants only to the extent

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1 that funds are appropriated for such grants by the
2 Legislature.

3 Section 73. Establishment of municipal service taxing
4 or benefit units; grants to rural counties.--

5 (1) As used in this section, the term "rural county"
6 means a county with a population of 75,000 or fewer persons,
7 determined pursuant to section 186.901, Florida Statutes.

8 (2) Subject to legislative appropriation, the
9 Department of Community Affairs shall establish a grant
10 program to assist any rural county in making a determination
11 whether to establish a municipal service taxing or benefit
12 unit as authorized by section 125.01, Florida Statutes. Under
13 this program, any rural county that is considering the
14 establishment of a municipal service taxing or benefit unit
15 and that wishes to conduct a study to determine the necessity
16 for and advisability of establishing such a unit may apply to
17 the department for a grant to assist in financing the study.
18 If the application is approved by the department, the
19 department may award a grant to the county in an amount equal
20 to 75 percent of the cost of the study, if the county agrees
21 to finance 25 percent of the cost of the study itself. A copy
22 of the study shall be submitted to the department within 30
23 days after it is completed.

24 (3) The department shall establish an application form
25 and application procedures and requirements by rule pursuant
26 to chapter 120, Florida Statutes.

27 Section 74. There is appropriated from the General
28 Revenue Fund to the Department of Community Affairs for Fiscal
29 Year 1999-2000 the sum of \$1 million to carry out the purposes
30 of a grant program for rural county municipal service taxing
31 or benefit unit feasibility studies.

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1 Section 75. Paragraph (d) of subsection (4) of section
2 236.081, Florida Statutes, 1998 Supplement, is amended to
3 read:

4 236.081 Funds for operation of schools.--If the annual
5 allocation from the Florida Education Finance Program to each
6 district for operation of schools is not determined in the
7 annual appropriations act or the substantive bill implementing
8 the annual appropriations act, it shall be determined as
9 follows:

10 (4) COMPUTATION OF DISTRICT REQUIRED LOCAL
11 EFFORT.--The Legislature shall prescribe the aggregate
12 required local effort for all school districts collectively as
13 an item in the General Appropriations Act for each fiscal
14 year. The amount that each district shall provide annually
15 toward the cost of the Florida Education Finance Program for
16 kindergarten through grade 12 programs shall be calculated as
17 follows:

18 (d) Exclusions ~~Exclusion~~.--

19 1. In those instances in which:

20 a.1. There is litigation either attacking the
21 authority of the property appraiser to include certain
22 property on the tax assessment roll as taxable property or
23 contesting the assessed value of certain property on the tax
24 assessment roll, and

25 b.2. The assessed value of the property in contest
26 involves more than 6 percent of the total nonexempt assessment
27 roll,

28

29 the assessed value of the property in contest shall be
30 excluded from the taxable value for school purposes for
31 purposes of computing the district required local effort.

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1 2. In those instances in which there is a nonpayment
2 of property taxes in a community designated as a rural area of
3 critical economic concern that exceeds 6 percent of the total
4 nonexempt assessment roll, the assessed value of the property
5 that is the subject of the nonpayment shall be excluded from
6 the taxable value for school purposes for purposes of
7 computing the district required local effort.

8 Section 76. Subsection (5) of section 378.601, Florida
9 Statutes, is amended to read:

10 378.601 Heavy minerals.--

11 (5) Any heavy mineral mining operation which annually
12 mines less than 500 acres and whose proposed consumption of
13 water is 3 million gallons per day or less shall not be
14 required to undergo development of regional impact review
15 pursuant to s. 380.06, provided permits and plan approvals
16 pursuant to either this section and part IV of chapter 373, or
17 s. 378.901, are issued. This subsection applies only in the
18 following circumstances:

19 (a) Mining is conducted in counties where the operator
20 has conducted heavy mineral mining activities prior to March
21 1, 1997; and

22 (b) The operator of the heavy mineral mining operation
23 has executed a developer agreement pursuant to s. 380.032 or
24 has received a development order under s. 380.06(15) as of
25 March 1, 1997. Lands mined pursuant to this section need not
26 be the subject of the developer agreement or development
27 order.

28 Section 77. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation
29 Commission is directed to assist the Florida Commission on
30 Tourism; the Florida Tourism Industry Marketing Corporation,
31 doing business as VISIT Florida; convention and visitor

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1 bureaus; tourist development councils; economic development
2 organizations; and local governments through the provision of
3 marketing advice, technical expertise, promotional support,
4 and product development related to nature-based recreation and
5 sustainable use of natural resources. In carrying out this
6 responsibility, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation
7 Commission shall focus its efforts on fostering nature-based
8 recreation in rural communities and regions encompassing rural
9 communities. As used in this section, the term "nature-based
10 recreation" means leisure activities related to the state's
11 lands, waters, and fish and wildlife resources, including, but
12 not limited to, wildlife viewing, fishing, hiking, canoeing,
13 kayaking, camping, hunting, backpacking, and nature
14 photography. For the purposes of this section, there is
15 appropriated from the General Revenue Fund, for Fiscal Year
16 1999-2000, the sum of \$103,000 to the Florida Fish and
17 Wildlife Conservation Commission to be used as marketing money
18 to promote nature-based recreation as authorized in this
19 section.

20 Section 78. Notwithstanding the provisions of section
21 290.044(4), Florida Statutes, regarding the distribution of
22 funds to categories under the Florida Small Cities Community
23 Development Block Grant Program, in no case shall the
24 percentage of funds for the economic development category be
25 less than 40 percent.

26
27 (Redesignate subsequent sections.)

28
29
30 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

31 And the title is amended as follows:

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1 On page 10, line 15, after the semicolon
2
3 insert:
4 providing a short title; providing intent;
5 amending s. 163.3177, F.S.; providing
6 requirements for the future land use element of
7 a local government comprehensive plan with
8 respect to rural areas; amending s. 186.502,
9 F.S.; providing that a regional planning
10 council shall have a duty to assist local
11 governments with economic development; amending
12 s. 186.504, F.S.; providing that the ex
13 officio, nonvoting membership of each regional
14 planning council shall include a representative
15 nominated by Enterprise Florida, Inc., and the
16 Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic
17 Development; amending s. 186.505, F.S.;
18 authorizing the use of regional planning
19 council personnel, consultants, or technical or
20 professional assistants to help local
21 governments with economic development
22 activities; amending s. 288.018, F.S.;
23 authorizing the Office of Tourism, Trade, and
24 Economic Development to approve regional rural
25 development grants on an annual basis;
26 increasing the maximum amount of each grant
27 award; increasing the total amount that may be
28 expended annually for such grants; amending s.
29 288.065, F.S.; revising the population criteria
30 for local government participation in the Rural
31 Community Development Revolving Loan Fund;

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1 prescribing conditions under which repayments
2 of principal and interest under the Rural
3 Community Development Revolving Loan Fund may
4 be retained by a unit of local government;
5 creating s. 288.0655, F.S.; creating the Rural
6 Infrastructure Fund for infrastructure projects
7 in rural communities; providing for an annual
8 deposit in the Economic Development Trust Fund
9 in support of such infrastructure fund;
10 authorizing grants for infrastructure projects
11 and related studies; requiring the development
12 of guidelines; providing that funds
13 appropriated for such infrastructure fund shall
14 not be subject to reversion; amending s.
15 320.20, F.S.; requiring the deposit of a
16 certain amount of motor vehicle registration
17 funds in the Economic Development Trust Fund in
18 support of the Rural Infrastructure Fund;
19 prescribing the manner in which such funds may
20 be used; prohibiting diversion of such funds;
21 creating the Rural Economic Development
22 Initiative within the office and providing its
23 duties and responsibilities; directing
24 specified agencies to select a representative
25 to work with the initiative; providing for the
26 recommendation and designation of rural areas
27 of critical economic concern; providing for the
28 waiver of certain criteria and rules with
29 respect to such areas; providing for the
30 commitment of certain services, resources,
31 benefits, and staffing with respect to such

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1 areas; requiring execution of a memorandum of
2 agreement as a condition to designation as a
3 rural area of critical economic concern;
4 providing for an annual report; authorizing the
5 Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic
6 Development to accept and administer moneys
7 appropriated for grants to assist rural
8 communities to develop and implement strategic
9 economic development plans; providing for
10 review of grant applications; authorizing the
11 Department of Community Affairs to establish a
12 grant program to assist rural counties in
13 financing studies regarding the establishment
14 of municipal service taxing or benefit units;
15 providing for rules; providing an
16 appropriation; amending s. 236.081, F.S.;
17 providing an exclusion under the computation of
18 school district required local effort for
19 certain nonpayment of property taxes in a rural
20 area of critical economic concern; amending s.
21 378.601, F.S.; exempting specified heavy mining
22 operations from requirements for
23 development-of-regional-impact review under
24 certain circumstances; directing the Florida
25 Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to
26 provide assistance related to promotion and
27 development of nature-based recreation;
28 providing an appropriation; specifying a
29 minimum percentage of funds to be allocated to
30 economic development under the Florida Small
31 Cities Community Development Block Grant

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