

By Senator Holzendorf

2-1364-02

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to economically distressed  
3           communities; amending s. 288.901, F.S.;  
4           expanding the membership of the board of  
5           directors of Enterprise Florida, Inc., to  
6           include certain economic development or  
7           community development representatives; amending  
8           s. 288.9015, F.S.; revising duties of  
9           Enterprise Florida, Inc., relating to economic  
10          development in certain communities; providing  
11          legislative findings and intent regarding  
12          economically distressed communities;  
13          prescribing duties and activities of Enterprise  
14          Florida, Inc., relating to economically  
15          distressed communities; requiring information  
16          on such duties and activities to be included in  
17          the annual report of Enterprise Florida, Inc.;  
18          providing an effective date.

19  
20           WHEREAS, there are many economically distressed  
21          communities in the state which have not experienced the  
22          economic prosperity enjoyed by other communities in the state,  
23          and

24           WHEREAS, the state has created a number of programs,  
25          designations, and initiatives designed to improve conditions  
26          in economically distressed communities, and

27           WHEREAS, these programs, designations, and initiatives  
28          tend to operate in isolation and cannot alone effect  
29          substantial improvement in all economically distressed  
30          communities, and

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1           WHEREAS, businesses that are expanding or relocating  
2 would be more willing to invest in economically distressed  
3 communities were they aware of the opportunities and  
4 advantages available in such areas, and

5           WHEREAS, Enterprise Florida, Inc., as the principal  
6 economic development organization for the state, is in regular  
7 contact with existing, expanding, and relocating businesses  
8 and is in a unique position to provide such businesses with  
9 information concerning available sites and investment  
10 incentives in the state, and

11           WHEREAS, Enterprise Florida, Inc., is in a unique  
12 position to market economically distressed communities to  
13 expanding and relocating businesses and to help coordinate the  
14 various programs, designations, and initiatives designed to  
15 encourage greater business investment in such communities, and

16           WHEREAS, in a December 2001 review of Enterprise  
17 Florida, Inc., the Office of Program Policy Analysis and  
18 Government Accountability found that, although Enterprise  
19 Florida, Inc., has implemented some strategies to assist  
20 economic-development efforts in the state's urban and rural  
21 distressed areas, many of the jobs Enterprise Florida, Inc.,  
22 claims that it helped to create and retain in urban distressed  
23 areas may not have resulted from its specific strategies and  
24 activities targeted to these areas, and

25           WHEREAS, the Office of Program Policy Analysis and  
26 Government Accountability also found that Enterprise Florida,  
27 Inc., is not providing certain types of services needed by  
28 some rural economic-development organizations, NOW, THEREFORE,

29  
30 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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1           Section 1. Paragraphs (i) and (j) are added to  
2 subsection (3) of section 288.901, Florida Statutes, to read:

3           288.901 Enterprise Florida, Inc.; creation;  
4 membership; organization; meetings; disclosure.--

5           (3) Enterprise Florida, Inc., shall be governed by a  
6 board of directors. The board of directors shall consist of  
7 the following members:

8           (i) A representative of a local or regional  
9 economic-development organization or community-development  
10 organization serving a large urban area that contains multiple  
11 economically distressed communities or neighborhoods. The  
12 representative must have experience in working to improve  
13 economic conditions in these communities or neighborhoods.

14           (j) A representative of a local or regional  
15 economic-development organization or community-development  
16 organization serving a rural area that contains multiple  
17 economically distressed communities or neighborhoods. The  
18 representative must have experience in working to improve  
19 economic conditions in these communities or neighborhoods.

20           Section 2. Subsection (2) of section 288.9015, Florida  
21 Statutes, is amended to read:

22           288.9015 Enterprise Florida, Inc.; purpose; duties.--

23           (2) It shall be the responsibility of Enterprise  
24 Florida, Inc., to aggressively market Florida's rural  
25 communities, economically distressed urban communities, and  
26 enterprise zones as locations for potential new investment, to  
27 aggressively assist in the retention and expansion of existing  
28 businesses in these communities, and to aggressively assist  
29 these communities in the identification and development of new  
30 economic development opportunities for job creation, fully  
31 marketing and facilitating use of state incentive programs

1 such as the Qualified Target Industry Tax Refund Program under  
2 s. 288.106, ~~and~~ the Quick Action Closing Fund under s.  
3 288.1088, high-impact performance grants under s. 288.108, and  
4 contracts for transportation projects under s. 288.063 in  
5 economically distressed areas.

6 Section 3. Duties of Enterprise Florida, Inc.;  
7 economically distressed communities.--

8 (1) The Legislature finds that achieving meaningful  
9 economic development in the most economically distressed  
10 communities in the state requires a concerted effort by state  
11 and local economic-development organizations, including the  
12 dedication of substantial human and financial resources by  
13 such organizations. The Legislature further finds that,  
14 although it is important for Enterprise Florida, Inc., to  
15 incorporate the needs of economically distressed communities  
16 into all of its programs and activities, it is also critical  
17 that Enterprise Florida, Inc., focus special attention on such  
18 communities. It is, therefore, the intent of the Legislature  
19 that Enterprise Florida, Inc., develop and implement a  
20 comprehensive program of activities designed specifically to  
21 facilitate economic development in economically distressed  
22 communities.

23 (2) Enterprise Florida, Inc., shall establish a  
24 programmatic unit within the organization which is dedicated  
25 specifically to facilitating business formation and business  
26 expansion in, as well as business relocation to, economically  
27 distressed communities. One of the principal outcomes of the  
28 programmatic unit should be improved economic conditions in  
29 those communities in the state which have traditionally  
30 experienced less economic-development activity than the  
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1 communities in the state which are experiencing the most  
2 economic development activity.

3 (3) In determining whether a community is appropriate  
4 for assistance under this section, Enterprise Florida, Inc.,  
5 shall develop and consider criteria that include, without  
6 limitation, whether:

7 (a) The state has made few or no state  
8 economic-development incentive awards to businesses or  
9 economic-development projects located in the community.

10 (b) The number of new jobs created in the community  
11 lags significantly behind the number of new jobs created in  
12 communities in the state which are experiencing the most  
13 growth and economic activity.

14 (c) The community has a large number of abandoned  
15 business properties.

16 (d) The community has a high rate of unemployment or  
17 underemployment compared to the state average.

18 (e) The community is not currently part of a specific  
19 geographic area targeted for economic revitalization under a  
20 state or federal program, such as the enterprise zone program,  
21 or, if it is part of such an area, whether it has not  
22 experienced marked economic revitalization in the time since  
23 it was designated under the program.

24 (4) As part of its duties under this section,  
25 Enterprise Florida, Inc., shall:

26 (a) Establish at least seven regions around the state,  
27 consistent with the strategic plan developed under section  
28 288.905, Florida Statutes, and assign one new or existing  
29 staff member from the organization per region to serve as a  
30 representative to the region for the specific purpose of  
31 coordinating activities of Enterprise Florida, Inc., designed

1 to facilitate economic development in economically distressed  
2 communities within that region.

3 1. Each regional representative shall coordinate with  
4 economic-development organizations and community-development  
5 organizations serving the economically distressed communities  
6 in the region, as well as with state agencies that have  
7 programs of potential benefit to such communities.

8 2. Each regional representative shall regularly  
9 coordinate with the business-development representatives of  
10 Enterprise Florida, Inc., to ensure that prospective new,  
11 expanding, or relocating businesses are provided information  
12 concerning potential sites within the economically distressed  
13 communities in the region.

14 3. Each regional representative shall serve as a point  
15 of contact for existing businesses in the economically  
16 distressed communities in the region which are seeking  
17 assistance to sustain or expand business operations.

18 4. Enterprise Florida, Inc., shall market the  
19 existence and services of the regional representatives to  
20 local governments, businesses, economic-development  
21 organizations, and community-development organizations within  
22 the regions. At a minimum, Enterprise Florida, Inc., shall  
23 ensure that contact information for the representatives is  
24 available on the website for the organization and in pertinent  
25 marketing materials for the organization.

26 5. As part of the annual report submitted prior to  
27 December 1, 2002, under section 288.906, Florida Statutes,  
28 Enterprise Florida, Inc., shall include recommendations  
29 concerning whether the organization should expand the use of  
30 regional representatives beyond service to economically  
31 distressed communities. This report shall consider whether the

1 organization should use regional representatives to conduct a  
2 wide variety of business-development activities throughout the  
3 region in order to enhance the organization's service to  
4 businesses, economic-development organizations, and other  
5 customers and to improve the organization's understanding of  
6 the needs of the various regions in the state. If Enterprise  
7 Florida, Inc., recommends greater use of regional  
8 representatives, it shall include in the report information  
9 concerning budget changes it considers necessary to implement  
10 that recommendation.

11 (b) Work with economic-development organizations and  
12 community-development organizations to identify properties in  
13 the economically distressed community which are suitable for  
14 use by expanding or relocating businesses.

15 (c) Market properties identified under paragraph (b)  
16 to relocating or expanding businesses.

17 (d) Work with Workforce Florida, Inc., and the Agency  
18 for Workforce Innovation to assess and enhance the workforce  
19 skills of individuals residing in the economically distressed  
20 community, in order to make the community more marketable to  
21 expanding or relocating businesses.

22 (e) Market and use, as fully as practicable, general  
23 economic-development incentives in economically distressed  
24 communities, such as the tax refund program for qualified  
25 target industry businesses under section 288.106, Florida  
26 Statutes; high-impact performance grants under section  
27 288.108, Florida Statutes; the Quick Action Closing Fund under  
28 section 288.1088, Florida Statutes; and contracts for  
29 transportation projects under section 288.063, Florida  
30 Statutes. Enterprise Florida, Inc., also shall market and use,  
31 as fully as practicable, economic-development incentives that

1 are specifically targeted toward economically distressed  
2 communities, such as the Urban High-Crime Area Job Tax Credit  
3 Program under section 212.097, Florida Statutes, and the Rural  
4 Job Tax Credit Program under section 212.098, Florida  
5 Statutes.

6 (f) Recommend to the Legislature revisions to existing  
7 economic-development incentives to promote greater use of such  
8 incentives in economically distressed communities or the  
9 creation of new economic-development incentives tailored to  
10 such communities.

11 (g) Develop, in consultation with the Office of  
12 Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability,  
13 measures to assess the performance of Enterprise Florida,  
14 Inc., under this section and to assess changes in the level of  
15 economic investment in economically distressed communities.

16 (h) Include, as part of the annual report submitted  
17 under section 288.906, Florida Statutes, a report of the  
18 organization's activities and performance under this section.  
19 The report must include the most recent performance data  
20 available for the measures developed under paragraph (g).

21 (5) In carrying out the provisions of this section,  
22 Enterprise Florida, Inc., shall consult and coordinate with  
23 other agencies and organizations engaged in activities related  
24 to economically distressed communities, including, without  
25 limitation:

26 (a) The Department of Community Affairs;

27 (b) The Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic  
28 Development;

29 (c) The Office of Urban Opportunity;

30 (d) The Black Business Investment Board;

31 (e) Workforce Florida, Inc.;

