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CHAMBER ACTION

Senate

House

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Floor: WD/2R
4/30/2008 4:55 PM

Senator Lynn moved the following **amendment**:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Between lines 3942 and 3943,

insert:

Section 27. Section 288.0656, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

288.0656 Rural Economic Development Initiative.--

(1)(a) Recognizing that rural communities and regions continue to face extraordinary challenges in their efforts to achieve significant improvements to their economies, specifically in terms of personal income, job creation, average wages, and strong tax bases, it is the intent of the Legislature to encourage and facilitate the location and expansion in such rural communities of major economic development projects of significant scale.



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

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

22 (a) "Catalyst project" means a business locating or
23 expanding in a rural area of critical economic concern which is
24 likely to serve as an economic growth opportunity of regional
25 significance for the growth of a regional target industry
26 cluster. The project shall provide capital investment of
27 significant scale which will affect the entire region and will
28 facilitate the development of high-wage and high-skill jobs.

29 (b) "Catalyst site" means a parcel or parcels of land
30 within a rural area of critical economic concern that has been
31 prioritized by representatives of the jurisdictions within the
32 rural area of critical economic concern, reviewed by REDI, and
33 approved by the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic
34 Development for purposes of locating a catalyst project.

35 (c) ~~(a)~~ "Economic distress" means conditions affecting the
36 fiscal and economic viability of a rural community, including
37 such factors as low per capita income, low per capita taxable
38 values, high unemployment, high underemployment, low weekly
39 earned wages compared to the state average, low housing values
40 compared to the state average, high percentages of the population
41 receiving public assistance, high poverty levels compared to the
42 state average, and a lack of year-round stable employment
43 opportunities.

44 (d) "Rural area of critical economic concern" means a rural
45 community, or a region composed of rural communities, designated
46 by the Governor, which has been adversely affected by an



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47 | extraordinary economic event, severe or chronic distress, or a
48 | natural disaster or which presents a unique economic development
49 | opportunity of regional impact.

50 | (e) ~~(b)~~ "Rural community" means:

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

52 | 2. A county with a population of 120,000 ~~100,000~~ or less
53 | that is contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000 or
54 | less.

55 | 3. A municipality within a county described in subparagraph
56 | 1. or subparagraph 2.

57 | 4. An unincorporated federal enterprise community or an
58 | incorporated rural city with a population of 25,000 or less and
59 | an employment base focused on traditional agricultural or
60 | resource-based industries, located in a county not defined as
61 | rural, which has at least three or more of the economic distress
62 | factors identified in paragraph (a) and verified by the Office of
63 | Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development.

64 |
65 | For purposes of this paragraph, population shall be determined in
66 | accordance with the most recent official estimate pursuant to s.
67 | 186.901.

68 | (3) REDI shall be responsible for coordinating and focusing
69 | the efforts and resources of state and regional agencies on the
70 | problems which affect the fiscal, economic, and community
71 | viability of Florida's economically distressed rural communities,
72 | working with local governments, community-based organizations,
73 | and private organizations that have an interest in the growth and
74 | development of these communities to find ways to balance
75 | environmental and growth management issues with local needs.



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76 (4) REDI shall review and evaluate the impact of laws
77 ~~statutes~~ and rules on rural communities and ~~shall~~ work to
78 minimize any adverse impact and shall undertake outreach and
79 capacity-building efforts.

80 (5) REDI shall facilitate better access to state resources
81 by promoting direct access and referrals to appropriate state and
82 regional agencies and statewide organizations. REDI may undertake
83 outreach, capacity-building, and other advocacy efforts to
84 improve conditions in rural communities. These activities may
85 include sponsorship of conferences and achievement awards.

86 (6) (a) By August 1 of each year, the head of each of the
87 following agencies and organizations shall designate a high-level
88 staff person from within the agency or organization to serve as
89 the REDI representative for the agency or organization:

- 90 1. The Department of Community Affairs.
- 91 2. The Department of Transportation.
- 92 3. The Department of Environmental Protection.
- 93 4. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.
- 94 5. The Department of State.
- 95 6. The Department of Health.
- 96 7. The Department of Children and Family Services.
- 97 8. The Department of Corrections.
- 98 9. The Agency for Workforce Innovation.
- 99 10. The Department of Education.
- 100 11. The Department of Juvenile Justice.
- 101 12. The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.
- 102 13. Each water management district.
- 103 14. Enterprise Florida, Inc.
- 104 15. Workforce Florida, Inc.
- 105 16. The Florida Commission on Tourism or VISIT Florida.



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- 106 17. The Florida Regional Planning Council Association.
- 107 18. The Agency for Health Care Administration ~~Florida State~~
- 108 ~~Rural Development Council~~.
- 109 19. The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS).
- 110

111 An alternate for each designee shall also be chosen, and the
112 names of the designees and alternates shall be sent to the
113 director of the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic
114 Development.

115 (b) Each REDI representative must have comprehensive
116 knowledge of his or her agency's functions, both regulatory and
117 service in nature, and of the state's economic goals, policies,
118 and programs. This person shall be the primary point of contact
119 for his or her agency with REDI on issues and projects relating
120 to economically distressed rural communities and with regard to
121 expediting project review, shall ensure a prompt effective
122 response to problems arising with regard to rural issues, and
123 shall work closely with the other REDI representatives in the
124 identification of opportunities for preferential awards of
125 program funds and allowances and waiver of program requirements
126 when necessary to encourage and facilitate long-term private
127 capital investment and job creation.

128 (c) The REDI representatives shall work with REDI in the
129 review and evaluation of statutes and rules for adverse impact on
130 rural communities and the development of alternative proposals to
131 mitigate that impact.

132 (d) Each REDI representative shall be responsible for
133 ensuring that each district office or facility of his or her
134 agency is informed about the Rural Economic Development



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135 Initiative and for providing assistance throughout the agency in
136 the implementation of REDI activities.

137 (7) (a) REDI may recommend to the Governor up to three rural
138 areas of critical economic concern. ~~A rural area of critical~~
139 ~~economic concern must be a rural community, or a region composed~~
140 ~~of such, that has been adversely affected by an extraordinary~~
141 ~~economic event or a natural disaster or that presents a unique~~
142 ~~economic development opportunity of regional impact that will~~
143 ~~create more than 1,000 jobs over a 5-year period.~~ The Governor
144 may by executive order designate up to three rural areas of
145 critical economic concern which will establish these areas as
146 priority assignments for REDI as well as to allow the Governor,
147 acting through REDI, to waive criteria, requirements, or similar
148 provisions of any economic development incentive. Such incentives
149 shall include, but not be limited to: the Qualified Target
150 Industry Tax Refund Program under s. 288.106, the Quick Response
151 Training Program under s. 288.047, the Quick Response Training
152 Program for participants in the welfare transition program under
153 s. 288.047(8), transportation projects under s. 288.063, the
154 brownfield redevelopment bonus refund under s. 288.107, and the
155 rural job tax credit program under ss. 212.098 and 220.1895.

156 (b) Designation as a rural area of critical economic
157 concern under this subsection shall be contingent upon the
158 execution of a memorandum of agreement among the Office of
159 Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development; the governing body of
160 the county; and the governing bodies of any municipalities to be
161 included within a rural area of critical economic concern. Such
162 agreement shall specify the terms and conditions of the
163 designation, including, but not limited to, the duties and
164 responsibilities of the county and any participating



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165 municipalities to take actions designed to facilitate the
166 retention and expansion of existing businesses in the area, as
167 well as the recruitment of new businesses to the area.

168 (c) Each rural area of critical economic concern may
169 designate catalyst projects provided that each catalyst project
170 is specifically recommended by REDI, identified as a catalyst
171 project by Enterprise Florida, Inc., and confirmed as a catalyst
172 project by the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic
173 Development. All state agencies and departments shall use all
174 available tools and resources to the extent permissible by law to
175 promote the creation and development of each catalyst project and
176 the development of catalyst sites.

177 (8) REDI shall assist local governments within rural areas
178 of critical economic concern with comprehensive planning needs
179 pursuant to s. 163.3184(20) and which implement the provisions of
180 this section. Such assistance shall reflect a multidisciplinary
181 approach among all agencies and shall include economic
182 development and planning objectives.

183 (a) A local government may request assistance in the
184 preparation of plan amendments that will stimulate economic
185 activity.

186 1. The local government must contact the Office of Tourism,
187 Trade, and Economic Development to request assistance.

188 2. REDI representatives shall meet with the local
189 government within 15 days after such request to develop the scope
190 of assistance that will be provided to assist the development,
191 transmittal, and adoption of the proposed comprehensive plan
192 amendment.

193 3. As part of the assistance provided, REDI representatives
194 shall also identify other needed local and developer actions for



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195 approval of the project and recommend a timeline for the local
196 government and developer which will minimize project delays.

197 (b) In addition, REDI shall solicit requests each year for
198 assistance from local governments within a rural area of critical
199 economic concern to update the future land use element and other
200 associated elements of the local government's comprehensive plan
201 to better position the community to respond to economic
202 development potential within the county or municipality. REDI
203 shall provide direct assistance to such local governments to
204 update their comprehensive plans pursuant to this paragraph. At
205 least one comprehensive planning technical assistance effort
206 shall be selected each year.

207 (c) REDI shall develop and annually update a technical
208 assistance manual based upon experiences learned in providing
209 direct assistance under this subsection.

210 (9) As further incentive for development of jobs and
211 advancement of health care in areas that are both a fiscally
212 constrained county pursuant to s. 218.67 and a rural area of
213 critical economic concern as designated by the Governor pursuant
214 to s. 288.0656, the provisions of Rule 9J-5.006(5), Florida
215 Administrative Code, regulating sprawl shall not be applicable to
216 a development of regional impact governed by s. 380.06 if such
217 development is a multiuse development containing at least three
218 distinct uses and such development provides a hospital with a
219 minimum of 250 beds, both of which criteria shall be met within
220 10 years after receipt of a final development order.

221 (10)~~(8)~~ REDI shall submit a report to the Governor, the
222 President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of
223 Representatives each year on or before ~~September~~ February 1 on
224 all REDI activities for the prior fiscal year. This report shall



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225 include a status report on all projects currently being
226 coordinated through REDI, the number of preferential awards and
227 allowances made pursuant to this section, the dollar amount of
228 such awards, and the names of the recipients. The report shall
229 also include a description of all waivers of program requirements
230 granted. The report shall also include information as to the
231 economic impact of the projects coordinated by REDI.

232
233 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

234 And the title is amended as follows:

235 On line 219, after the semicolon,
236 insert:

237 amending s. 288.0656, F.S.; providing legislative intent;
238 revising definitions; providing certain additional review
239 and action requirements for REDI relating to rural
240 communities; revising representation on REDI; deleting a
241 limitation on characterization as a rural area of critical
242 economic concern; authorizing rural areas of critical
243 economic concern to designate certain catalyst projects
244 for certain purposes; providing project requirements;
245 requiring the initiative to assist local governments with
246 certain comprehensive planning needs; providing procedures
247 and requirements for such assistance; revising certain
248 reporting requirements for REDI; providing for
249 nonapplication of certain administrative rules to certain
250 developments of regional impact under certain
251 circumstances;