

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
 2       An act relating to economic recovery from the Deepwater  
 3       Horizon disaster; amending s. 288.0656, F.S.; designating  
 4       the Counties of Bay, Escambia, Franklin, Gulf, Okaloosa,  
 5       Santa Rosa, and Walton, and the municipalities within  
 6       those counties, as a rural area of critical economic  
 7       concern for purposes of the Rural Economic Development  
 8       Initiative; providing that the area is a priority  
 9       assignment, eligible for certain waivers, and exempt from  
 10      specified requirements; providing appropriations;  
 11      providing for reserve, release, use, and reversion of  
 12      appropriated funds; requiring the Office of Tourism,  
 13      Trade, and Economic Development to contract with Florida's  
 14      Great Northwest, Inc., to develop and implement an  
 15      economic development program in the Counties of Bay,  
 16      Escambia, Franklin, Gulf, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Wakulla,  
 17      and Walton; providing contract requirements; providing for  
 18      expiration; providing an effective date.

19  
 20   Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 22           Section 1. Subsections (3) and (4) and paragraph (c) of  
 23      subsection (6) of section 288.0656, Florida Statutes, are  
 24      amended, and subsection (9) is added to that section, to read:

25           288.0656 Rural Economic Development Initiative.—

26           (3) REDI shall be responsible for coordinating and  
 27      focusing the efforts and resources of state and regional  
 28      agencies on the problems which affect the fiscal, economic, and

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29 community viability of Florida's economically distressed rural  
30 communities and rural areas of critical economic concern,  
31 working with local governments, community-based organizations,  
32 and private organizations that have an interest in the growth  
33 and development of these communities to find ways to balance  
34 environmental and growth management issues with local needs.

35 (4) REDI shall review and evaluate the impact of statutes  
36 and rules on rural communities and rural areas of critical  
37 economic concern and shall work to minimize any adverse impact  
38 and undertake outreach and capacity-building efforts.

39 (6)

40 (c) The REDI representatives shall work with REDI in the  
41 review and evaluation of statutes and rules for adverse impact  
42 on rural communities and rural areas of critical economic  
43 concern and the development of alternative proposals to mitigate  
44 that impact.

45 (9) (a) For purposes of this section, the Counties of Bay,  
46 Escambia, Franklin, Gulf, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, and Walton, and  
47 the municipalities within those counties, are designated as a  
48 rural area of critical economic concern.

49 (b) The area is a priority assignment for REDI and  
50 eligible for waiver of criteria, requirements, or similar  
51 provisions of any economic development incentive pursuant to  
52 paragraph (7) (a) and is exempt from the requirements of  
53 paragraph (7) (b).

54 (c) This subsection expires on June 30, 2014.

55 Section 2. (1) For fiscal years 2011-2012, 2012-2013, and  
56 2013-2014, the sum of \$10 million per fiscal year in recurring

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57 funds from the General Revenue Fund is appropriated to the  
58 Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development for the  
59 purpose of contracting with Florida's Great Northwest, Inc., to  
60 develop and implement an innovative economic development program  
61 to promote research and development, commercialization of  
62 research, economic diversification, and job creation in the  
63 Counties of Bay, Escambia, Franklin, Gulf, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa,  
64 Wakulla, and Walton. The funds shall be placed in reserve by the  
65 Executive Office of the Governor and may be released as  
66 authorized by law or the Legislative Budget Commission. The  
67 funds may not be used to pay for the administrative costs of  
68 Florida's Great Northwest, Inc. Any funds remaining on June 30,  
69 2014, shall revert to the General Revenue Fund.

70 (2) The contract shall, at a minimum, require Florida's  
71 Great Northwest, Inc., to report quarterly to the Office of  
72 Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development and to collaborate with  
73 educational entities, economic development organizations, local  
74 governments, and relevant state agencies to create a program  
75 framework and strategy, including specific criteria for the  
76 expenditure of funds. The criteria for the expenditure of funds  
77 shall, at a minimum, require a funding preference for the  
78 Counties of Bay, Escambia, Franklin, Gulf, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa,  
79 Wakulla, and Walton, and the municipalities within those  
80 counties, which provides for expedited permitting in order to  
81 promote research and development, commercialization of research,  
82 economic diversification, and job creation within those  
83 jurisdictions.

84 (3) This section expires on June 30, 2014.

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Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2011.