

By Senator Pizzo

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Office of the Blue Economy;
3 amending s. 20.60, F.S.; establishing the Office of
4 the Blue Economy within the Department of Economic
5 Opportunity; creating s. 288.93, F.S.; defining the
6 term "blue economy"; providing duties of the Office of
7 the Blue Economy; authorizing the department to adopt
8 rules; amending s. 403.928, F.S.; conforming
9 provisions to changes made by the act; creating s.
10 403.9303, F.S.; requiring the Office of Economic and
11 Demographic Research to conduct a biennial evaluation
12 of the blue economy for inclusion in a certain
13 assessment; providing requirements for the evaluation;
14 providing an effective date.

15
16 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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18 Section 1. Paragraph (a) of subsection (3) of section
19 20.60, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

20 20.60 Department of Economic Opportunity; creation; powers
21 and duties.—

22 (3) (a) The following divisions and offices of the
23 Department of Economic Opportunity are established:

- 24 1. The Division of Strategic Business Development.
25 2. The Division of Community Development.
26 3. The Division of Workforce Services.
27 4. The Division of Finance and Administration.
28 5. The Division of Information Technology.
29 6. The Office of the Secretary.

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30 7. The Office of Economic Accountability and Transparency,
31 which shall:

32 a. Oversee the department's critical objectives as
33 determined by the secretary and make sure that the department's
34 key objectives are clearly communicated to the public.

35 b. Organize department resources, expertise, data, and
36 research to focus on and solve the complex economic challenges
37 facing the state.

38 c. Provide leadership for the department's priority issues
39 that require integration of policy, management, and critical
40 objectives from multiple programs and organizations internal and
41 external to the department; and organize and manage external
42 communication on such priority issues.

43 d. Promote and facilitate key department initiatives to
44 address priority economic issues and explore data and identify
45 opportunities for innovative approaches to address such economic
46 issues.

47 e. Promote strategic planning for the department.

48 8. The Office of the Blue Economy.

49 Section 2. Section 288.93, Florida Statutes, is created to
50 read:

51 288.93 Office of the Blue Economy.—

52 (1) For purposes of this section, the term "blue economy"
53 means the economic uses of ocean and coastal resources with a
54 focus on sustainable practices that benefit the long-term
55 outlook of relevant industry sectors and the competitive
56 positioning of the state in a global economy, including, but not
57 limited to, maritime industries such as shipyards, marinas,
58 marine terminals, piers, fishing, aquaculture, seafood

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59 processing, commercial diving, and marine transportation;
60 floating and amphibious housing; tourism; and outdoor
61 recreational activities, including, but not limited to, boating,
62 and industry sectors dependent on such activities.

63 (2) The Office of the Blue Economy shall:

64 (a) Support the state's economy by connecting the state's
65 ocean and coastal resources to economic development strategies
66 that enhance or contribute to the blue economy with a focus on
67 research and development, technological innovation, emerging
68 industries, strategic business recruitment, public and private
69 funding opportunities, and workforce training and education.

70 (b) Survey state universities and Florida College System
71 institutions on the development of academic research relating to
72 the blue economy across all disciplines. The office shall
73 encourage collaboration between state universities and Florida
74 College System institutions which have overlapping areas of
75 academic research. The office shall publish on the department's
76 website information on such collaboration and the current
77 research inventory.

78 (c) Collaborate with relevant industries to identify
79 economic challenges that may be solved through innovation in the
80 blue economy by commercializing or otherwise providing public
81 access to academic research and resources.

82 (d) Develop and facilitate a pipeline of academic research,
83 commercialization, accelerator programs, and startup funding.

84 (e) Publish on the department's website reports on the
85 number, growth, and average wages of jobs included in the blue
86 economy. Such reports must identify and address any relevant
87 labor shortages projected by the Labor Market Estimating

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88 Conference pursuant to s. 216.136(7).

89 (f) Educate other state and local entities on the interests
90 of the blue economy and how such entities may positively address
91 environmental issues while simultaneously considering the
92 economic impact of their policies.

93 (g) Communicate the state's role as an integral component
94 of the blue economy by promoting this state on national and
95 international platforms and other appropriate forums as the
96 premier destination for convening on pertinent subject matters.

97 (3) The department may adopt rules to administer this
98 section.

99 Section 3. Paragraph (f) is added to subsection (1) of
100 section 403.928, Florida Statutes, to read:

101 403.928 Assessment of water resources and conservation
102 lands.—The Office of Economic and Demographic Research shall
103 conduct an annual assessment of Florida's water resources and
104 conservation lands.

105 (1) WATER RESOURCES.—The assessment must include all of the
106 following:

107 (f) Biennially, beginning on January 1, 2024, the
108 evaluation of the state's blue economy required under s.
109 403.9303.

110 Section 4. Section 403.9303, Florida Statutes, is created
111 to read:

112 403.9303 Blue economy evaluation.—

113 (1) Beginning January 1, 2024, the Office of Economic and
114 Demographic Research shall conduct a biennial evaluation of the
115 state's blue economy for inclusion in its annual assessment
116 conducted pursuant to s. 403.928.

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117 (2) The evaluation must include the following:

118 (a) The historical and current contributions to the state's
119 economy from maritime industries, including, but not limited to:

120 1. Shipyards, marinas, marine terminals, piers, fishing,
121 aquaculture, seafood processing, commercial diving, and marine
122 transportation.

123 2. Floating and amphibious housing.

124 3. Tourism.

125 4. Outdoor recreational activities, including, but not
126 limited to, boating, and industry sectors dependent on such
127 activities.

128 (b) Appropriate economic comparisons to other states to
129 identify comparative advantages and disadvantages.

130 (c) The identification and discussion of any growing,
131 emerging, or new industries that fit within the blue economy
132 structure.

133 (d) Beginning January 1, 2026, an analysis of the
134 contributions of the blue economy to the state, including, but
135 not limited to, the economic benefits, as defined in s.
136 288.005(1), of the efforts undertaken by the Office of the Blue
137 Economy pursuant to s. 288.93.

138 Section 5. This act shall take effect July 1, 2023.