

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 Commerce;
5 creating s. 288.93, F.S.; defining the term "blue
6 economy"; providing duties of the Office of the Blue
7 Economy; authorizing the department to adopt rules;
8 providing an effective date.

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10 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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12 Section 1. Paragraph (a) of subsection (3) of section
13 20.60, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

14 20.60 Department of Commerce; creation; powers and duties.-

15 (3) (a) The following divisions and offices of the
16 Department of Commerce are established:

- 17 1. The Division of Economic Development.
18 2. The Division of Community Development.
19 3. The Division of Workforce Services.
20 4. The Division of Finance and Administration.
21 5. The Division of Information Technology.
22 6. The Office of the Secretary.
23 7. The Office of Economic Accountability and Transparency,

24 which shall:

25 a. Oversee the department's critical objectives as
26 determined by the secretary and make sure that the department's
27 key objectives are clearly communicated to the public.

28 b. Organize department resources, expertise, data, and
29 research to focus on and solve the complex economic challenges

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30 facing the state.

31 c. Provide leadership for the department's priority issues
32 that require integration of policy, management, and critical
33 objectives from multiple programs and organizations internal and
34 external to the department; and organize and manage external
35 communication on such priority issues.

36 d. Promote and facilitate key department initiatives to
37 address priority economic issues and explore data and identify
38 opportunities for innovative approaches to address such economic
39 issues.

40 e. Promote strategic planning for the department.

41 8. The Office of the Blue Economy.

42 Section 2. Section 288.93, Florida Statutes, is created to
43 read:

44 288.93 Office of the Blue Economy.-

45 (1) For purposes of this section, the term "blue economy"
46 means the economic uses of ocean and coastal resources with a
47 focus on sustainable practices that benefit the long-term
48 outlook of relevant industry sectors and the competitive
49 positioning of the state in a global economy, including, but not
50 limited to, maritime industries, such as shipyards, marinas,
51 marine terminals, piers, fishing, aquaculture, seafood
52 processing, commercial diving, and marine transportation;
53 floating and amphibious housing; tourism; and outdoor
54 recreational activities, including, but not limited to, boating,
55 and industry sectors dependent on such activities.

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

57 (a) Support the state's economy by connecting the state's
58 ocean and coastal resources to economic development strategies

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59 that enhance or contribute to the blue economy with a focus on
60 research and development, technological innovation, emerging
61 industries, strategic business recruitment, public and private
62 funding opportunities, and workforce training and education.

63 (b) Survey state universities and Florida College System
64 institutions on the development of academic research relating to
65 the blue economy across all disciplines. The office shall
66 encourage collaboration between state universities and Florida
67 College System institutions with overlapping areas of academic
68 research. The office shall publish on the department's website
69 information on such collaboration and the current research
70 inventory.

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

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

77 (e) Publish on the department's website reports on the
78 number, growth, and average wages of jobs included in the blue
79 economy. Such reports must identify and address any relevant
80 labor shortages projected by the Labor Market Estimating
81 Conference pursuant to s. 216.136(7).

82 (f) Educate other state and local entities on the interests
83 of the blue economy and how such entities may positively address
84 environmental issues while simultaneously considering the
85 economic impact of their policies.

86 (g) Communicate the state's role as an integral component
87 of the blue economy by promoting the state on national and

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88 international platforms and other appropriate forums as the
89 premier destination for convening on pertinent subject matters.

90 (3) The department may adopt rules to administer this
91 section.

92 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2024.