

Amendment No.

CHAMBER ACTION

Senate

House

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1 Representative Hunschofsky offered the following:

2
3 **Amendment to Amendment (605877) (with title amendment)**

4 Remove lines 65-13380 and insert:

5 **Section 2. Paragraph (a) of subsection (3) and paragraph**
6 **(c) of subsection (10) of section 20.60, Florida Statutes, are**
7 **amended, and paragraph (a) of subsection (5) of that section is**
8 **reenacted, to read:**

9 20.60 Department of Commerce; creation; powers and
10 duties.—

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

- 13 1. The Division of Economic Development.

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14 2. The Division of Community Development.

15 3. The Division of Workforce Services.

16 4. The Division of Finance and Administration.

17 5. The Division of Information Technology.

18 6. The Office of the Secretary.

19 7. The Office of Rural Prosperity.

20 8. The Office of Economic Accountability and Transparency,
21 which shall:

22 a. Oversee the department's critical objectives as
23 determined by the secretary and make sure that the department's
24 key objectives are clearly communicated to the public.

25 b. Organize department resources, expertise, data, and
26 research to focus on and solve the complex economic challenges
27 facing the state.

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

33 d. Promote and facilitate key department initiatives to
34 address priority economic issues and explore data and identify
35 opportunities for innovative approaches to address such economic
36 issues.

37 e. Promote strategic planning for the department.

38 (5) The divisions within the department have specific

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39 responsibilities to achieve the duties, responsibilities, and
40 goals of the department. Specifically:

41 (a) The Division of Economic Development shall:

42 1. Analyze and evaluate business prospects identified by
43 the Governor and the secretary.

44 2. Administer certain tax refund, tax credit, and grant
45 programs created in law. Notwithstanding any other provision of
46 law, the department may expend interest earned from the
47 investment of program funds deposited in the Grants and
48 Donations Trust Fund to contract for the administration of those
49 programs, or portions of the programs, assigned to the
50 department by law, by the appropriations process, or by the
51 Governor. Such expenditures shall be subject to review under
52 chapter 216.

53 3. Develop measurement protocols for the state incentive
54 programs and for the contracted entities which will be used to
55 determine their performance and competitive value to the state.
56 Performance measures, benchmarks, and sanctions must be
57 developed in consultation with the legislative appropriations
58 committees and the appropriate substantive committees, and are
59 subject to the review and approval process provided in s.
60 216.177. The approved performance measures, standards, and
61 sanctions shall be included and made a part of the strategic
62 plan for contracts entered into for delivery of programs
63 authorized by this section.

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64 4. Develop a 5-year statewide strategic plan. The
65 strategic plan must include, but need not be limited to:

66 a. Strategies for the promotion of business formation,
67 expansion, recruitment, and retention through aggressive
68 marketing, attraction of venture capital and finance
69 development, domestic trade, international development, and
70 export assistance, which lead to more and better jobs and higher
71 wages for all geographic regions, disadvantaged communities, and
72 populations of the state, including rural areas, minority
73 businesses, and urban core areas.

74 b. The development of realistic policies and programs to
75 further the economic diversity of the state, its regions, and
76 their associated industrial clusters.

77 c. Specific provisions for the stimulation of economic
78 development and job creation in rural areas and midsize cities
79 and counties of the state, including strategies for rural
80 marketing and the development of infrastructure in rural areas.

81 d. Provisions for the promotion of the successful long-
82 term economic development of the state with increased emphasis
83 in market research and information.

84 e. Plans for the generation of foreign investment in the
85 state which create jobs paying above-average wages and which
86 result in reverse investment in the state, including programs
87 that establish viable overseas markets, assist in meeting the
88 financing requirements of export-ready firms, broaden

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89 opportunities for international joint venture relationships, use
90 the resources of academic and other institutions, coordinate
91 trade assistance and facilitation services, and facilitate
92 availability of and access to education and training programs
93 that assure requisite skills and competencies necessary to
94 compete successfully in the global marketplace.

95 f. The identification of business sectors that are of
96 current or future importance to the state's economy and to the
97 state's global business image, and development of specific
98 strategies to promote the development of such sectors.

99 g. Strategies for talent development necessary in the
100 state to encourage economic development growth, taking into
101 account factors such as the state's talent supply chain,
102 education and training opportunities, and available workforce.

103 h. Strategies and plans to support this state's defense,
104 space, and aerospace industries and the emerging complementary
105 business activities and industries that support the development
106 and growth of defense, space, and aerospace in this state.

107 5. Update the strategic plan every 5 years.

108 6. Involve CareerSource Florida, Inc.; direct-support
109 organizations of the department; local governments; the general
110 public; local and regional economic development organizations;
111 other local, state, and federal economic, international, and
112 workforce development entities; the business community; and
113 educational institutions to assist with the strategic plan.

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114 7. Coordinate with the Florida Tourism Industry Marketing
115 Corporation in the development of the 4-year marketing plan
116 pursuant to s. 288.1226(13).

117 8. Administer and manage relationships, as appropriate,
118 with the entities and programs created pursuant to the Florida
119 Capital Formation Act, ss. 288.9621-288.96255.

120 (10) The department shall, by November 1 of each year,
121 submit an annual report to the Governor, the President of the
122 Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives on the
123 condition of the business climate and economic development in
124 the state.

125 (c) The report must incorporate annual reports of other
126 programs, including:

127 1. A detailed report of the performance of the Black
128 Business Loan Program and a cumulative summary of quarterly
129 report data required under s. 288.714.

130 ~~2. The Rural Economic Development Initiative established~~
131 ~~under s. 288.0656.~~

132 ~~3.~~ A detailed report of the performance of the Florida
133 Development Finance Corporation and a summary of the
134 corporation's report required under s. 288.9610.

135 ~~3.4.~~ Information provided by Space Florida under s.
136 331.3051 and an analysis of the activities and accomplishments
137 of Space Florida.

138 **Section 3. Subsection (5) is added to section 163.3168,**

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139 **Florida Statutes, to read:**

140 163.3168 Planning innovations and technical assistance.—

141 (5) When selecting applications for funding for technical
142 assistance, the state land planning agency shall give preference
143 to local governments located in a rural area of opportunity as
144 defined in s. 288.0656. The state land planning agency shall
145 consult with the Office of Rural Prosperity when awarding
146 funding pursuant to this section.

147 **Section 4. Paragraph (h) of subsection (1) of section**
148 **215.971, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

149 215.971 Agreements funded with federal or state
150 assistance.—

151 (1) An agency agreement that provides state financial
152 assistance to a recipient or subrecipient, as those terms are
153 defined in s. 215.97, or that provides federal financial
154 assistance to a subrecipient, as defined by applicable United
155 States Office of Management and Budget circulars, must include
156 all of the following:

157 (h)1. If the agency agreement provides federal or state
158 financial assistance to a county or municipality that is a rural
159 community or rural area of opportunity as those terms are
160 defined in s. 288.0656(2), a provision allowing the agency to
161 provide for the payment of invoices to the county, municipality,
162 or rural area of opportunity as that term is defined in s.
163 288.0656(2), for verified and eligible performance that has been

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164 completed in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth
165 in the agreement. This provision is not intended to require
166 reimbursement to the county, municipality, or rural area of
167 opportunity for invoices paid, but to allow the agency to
168 provide for the payment of invoices due. The agency shall
169 expedite such payment requests in order to facilitate the timely
170 payment of invoices received by the county, municipality, or
171 rural area of opportunity. This provision is included to
172 alleviate the financial hardships that certain rural counties
173 and municipalities encounter when administering agreements, and
174 must be exercised by the agency when a county or municipality
175 demonstrates financial hardship, to the extent that federal or
176 state law, rule, or other regulation allows such payments. This
177 paragraph may not be construed to alter or limit any other
178 provisions of federal or state law, rule, or other regulation.

179 2. By August 1, 2026, and each year thereafter, each state
180 agency shall report to the Office of Rural Prosperity
181 summarizing the implementation of this paragraph for the
182 preceding fiscal year. The Office of Rural Prosperity shall
183 summarize the information received pursuant to this paragraph in
184 its annual report as required in s. 288.013.

185 **Section 5. Section 218.67, Florida Statutes, is amended to**
186 **read:**

187 218.67 Distribution for fiscally constrained counties.—

188 (1) Each county ~~that is entirely within a rural area of~~

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189 ~~opportunity as designated by the Governor pursuant to s.~~
190 ~~288.0656 or each county for which the value of a mill will raise~~
191 ~~no more than \$10 \$5 million in revenue, based on the taxable~~
192 ~~value certified pursuant to s. 1011.62(4)(a)1.a., from the~~
193 ~~previous July 1, shall be considered a fiscally constrained~~
194 ~~county.~~

195 (2) Each fiscally constrained county government that
196 participates in the local government half-cent sales tax shall
197 be eligible to receive an additional distribution ~~from the Local~~
198 ~~Government Half-cent Sales Tax Clearing Trust Fund,~~ as provided
199 in s. 212.20(6)(d)6. ~~s. 202.18(2)(c)1.,~~ in addition to its
200 regular monthly distribution provided under this part and any
201 emergency or supplemental distribution under s. 218.65.

202 (3) The amount to be distributed to each fiscally
203 constrained county shall be determined by the Department of
204 Revenue at the beginning of the fiscal year, using the prior
205 fiscal year's sales and use tax collections from the most recent
206 fiscal year that reports 12 months of collections ~~July 1 taxable~~
207 ~~value certified pursuant to s. 1011.62(4)(a)1.a., tax data,~~
208 population as defined in s. 218.21, and the most current
209 calendar year per capita personal income published by the Bureau
210 of Economic Analysis of the United States Department of Commerce
211 ~~millage rate levied for the prior fiscal year.~~ The amount
212 distributed shall be allocated based upon the following factors:

213 (a) The contribution-to-revenue ~~relative revenue raising~~

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214 ~~capacity~~ factor for each participating county shall equal 100
215 multiplied by a quotient, the numerator of which is the county's
216 population and the denominator of which is the state sales and
217 use tax collections attributable to the county ~~be the ability of~~
218 ~~the eligible county to generate ad valorem revenues from 1 mill~~
219 ~~of taxation on a per capita basis. A county that raises no more~~
220 ~~than \$25 per capita from 1 mill shall be assigned a value of 1;~~
221 ~~a county that raises more than \$25 but no more than \$30 per~~
222 ~~capita from 1 mill shall be assigned a value of 0.75; and a~~
223 ~~county that raises more than \$30 but no more than \$50 per capita~~
224 ~~from 1 mill shall be assigned a value of 0.5. No value shall be~~
225 ~~assigned to counties that raise more than \$50 per capita from 1~~
226 ~~mill of ad valorem taxation.~~

227 (b) The personal-income local effort factor shall equal a
228 quotient, the numerator of which is the median per capita
229 personal income of participating counties and the denominator of
230 which is the county's per capita personal income ~~be a measure of~~
231 ~~the relative level of local effort of the eligible county as~~
232 ~~indicated by the millage rate levied for the prior fiscal year.~~
233 ~~The local effort factor shall be the most recently adopted~~
234 ~~countywide operating millage rate for each eligible county~~
235 ~~multiplied by 0.1.~~

236 (c) Each eligible county's proportional allocation of the
237 total amount available to be distributed to all of the eligible
238 counties shall be in the same proportion as the sum of the

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239 county's two factors is to the sum of the two factors for all
240 eligible counties. The proportional rate computation must be
241 carried to the fifth decimal place, and the amount to distribute
242 to each county must be rounded to the next whole dollar amount.

243 The counties that are eligible to receive an allocation under
244 this subsection and the amount available to be distributed to
245 such counties do ~~shall~~ not include counties participating in the
246 phaseout period under subsection (4) or the amounts they remain
247 eligible to receive during the phaseout.

248 (4) For those counties that no longer qualify under the
249 requirements of subsection (1) after the effective date of this
250 act, there shall be a 2-year phaseout period. Beginning on July
251 1 of the year following the year in which the value of a mill
252 for that county exceeds \$10 ~~\$5~~ million in revenue, the county
253 shall receive two-thirds of the amount received in the prior
254 year, and beginning on July 1 of the second year following the
255 year in which the value of a mill for that county exceeds \$10 ~~\$5~~
256 million in revenue, the county shall receive one-third of the
257 amount received in the last year that the county qualified as a
258 fiscally constrained county. Following the 2-year phaseout
259 period, the county is ~~shall~~ no longer ~~be~~ eligible to receive any
260 distributions under this section unless the county can be
261 considered a fiscally constrained county as provided in
262 subsection (1).

263 (5) (a) The revenues received under this section must be

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264 allocated ~~may be used~~ by a county to be used for the following
265 purposes:

266 1. Fifty percent for public safety, including salary
267 expenditures for law enforcement officers or correctional
268 officers, as those terms are defined in s. 943.10(1) and (2),
269 respectively, firefighters as defined in s. 633.102, or
270 emergency medical technicians or paramedics as those terms are
271 defined in s. 401.23.

272 2. Thirty percent for infrastructure needs.

273 3. Twenty percent for any public purpose.

274 (b) The revenues received under this section ~~any public~~
275 purpose, except that such revenues may not be used to pay debt
276 service on bonds, notes, certificates of participation, or any
277 other forms of indebtedness.

278 **Section 6. Subsection (6) is added to section 288.0001,**
279 **Florida Statutes, to read:**

280 288.0001 Economic Development Programs Evaluation.—The
281 Office of Economic and Demographic Research and the Office of
282 Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA)
283 shall develop and present to the Governor, the President of the
284 Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the
285 chairs of the legislative appropriations committees the Economic
286 Development Programs Evaluation.

287 (6) (a) The Office of Economic and Demographic Research and
288 OPPAGA shall prepare a report on the impact of the Florida

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289 Statutes on rural communities. Specifically, the report must
290 include the following:

291 1. A review of definitions in the Florida Statutes of
292 terms such as "rural community," "rural area of opportunity,"
293 and other similar terms used to define rural areas of this
294 state, including population-based references, to assess the
295 adequacy of the current statutory framework in defining these
296 areas. The analysis must include, but need not be limited to:

297 a. Evaluation of whether current provisions properly
298 distinguish these communities or areas from more urban and
299 suburban parts of this state;

300 b. Consideration of updates to the definitions and
301 references to classify additional rural areas, such as growing
302 communities, unincorporated areas, or rural communities by
303 design; and

304 c. Study of appropriate metrics to be used to describe
305 rural communities or areas, such as population, geographic,
306 demographic, or other metrics, or combinations thereof.

307 2. A survey of local governments meeting the statutory
308 definition of "rural community" or "rural area of opportunity"
309 to assess the benefits to the local government of being
310 identified as such and any perceived unmet needs in the
311 implementation of current statutory provisions designed to
312 support rural communities or areas.

313 3. An analysis of state grant programs and recurring

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314 appropriations that explicitly benefit rural communities or
315 areas, including, but not limited to, program purpose, funding
316 amounts, participation rates, and consistency with peer-reviewed
317 studies on effective economic programs for these areas.

318 (b) Upon request, the Office of Economic and Demographic
319 Research and OPPAGA must be provided with all data necessary to
320 complete the report, including any confidential data, by any
321 entity with information related to this review. The offices may
322 collaborate on all data collection and analysis.

323 (c) The Office of Economic and Demographic Research and
324 OPPAGA shall submit a report to the President of the Senate and
325 the Speaker of the House of Representatives by December 31,
326 2025. The report must provide recommendations to address any
327 findings, including any changes in statutory definitions or
328 references to rural communities or areas, opportunities to
329 enhance state support to rural communities or areas, outcome
330 measures or other criteria that may be used to examine the
331 effectiveness of state grant programs for rural communities or
332 areas, and adjustments to program design, including changes to
333 increase participation in state grant programs for rural
334 communities or areas.

335 (d) This subsection expires July 1, 2026.

336 **Section 7. Present paragraphs (d) and (e) of subsection**
337 **(7) of section 288.001, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as**
338 **paragraphs (e) and (f), respectively, and a new paragraph (d) is**

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339 **added to that subsection, to read:**

340 288.001 The Florida Small Business Development Center
341 Network.—

342 (7) ADDITIONAL STATE FUNDS; USES; PAY-PER-PERFORMANCE
343 INCENTIVES; STATEWIDE SERVICE; SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS; BEST
344 PRACTICES; ELIGIBILITY.—

345 (d) Notwithstanding paragraphs (a), (b), and (c), the
346 network shall use funds directly appropriated for the specific
347 purpose of expanding service in rural communities, as defined in
348 s. 288.0656, in addition to any funds allocated by the network
349 from other sources. The network shall use the funds to develop
350 an activity plan focused on network consultants and resources in
351 rural communities. In collaboration with regional economic
352 development organizations as defined in s. 288.018, the plan
353 must provide for either full- or part-time consultants to be
354 available for at least 20 hours per week in rural areas or be
355 permanently stationed in rural areas. This may include
356 establishing a circuit in specific rural locations to ensure the
357 consultants' availability on a regular basis. By using the funds
358 to create a regular presence in rural areas, the network can
359 strengthen community collaboration, raise awareness of available
360 resources to provide opportunities for new business development
361 or existing business growth, and make professional experience,
362 education, and business information available in these essential
363 communities. The network may dedicate funds to facilitate local

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364 or regional events that focus on small business topics, provide
365 consulting services, and leverage partner organizations, such as
366 the regional economic development organizations, local workforce
367 development boards as described in s. 445.07, and Florida
368 College System institutions.

369 **Section 8. Section 288.007, Florida Statutes, is amended**
370 **to read:**

371 288.007 Inventory of communities seeking to recruit
372 businesses.—By September 30 of each year, a county or
373 municipality that has a population of at least 25,000 or its
374 local economic development organization, and each local
375 government within a rural area of opportunity as defined in s.
376 288.0656 or its local economic development organization, shall
377 ~~must~~ submit to the department a brief overview of the strengths,
378 services, and economic development incentives that its community
379 offers. The local government or its local economic development
380 organization also shall ~~must~~ identify any industries that it is
381 encouraging to locate or relocate to its area. Unless otherwise
382 required pursuant to this section, a county or municipality
383 having a population of 25,000 or less ~~fewer~~ or its local
384 economic development organization seeking to recruit businesses
385 may submit information as required in this section and may
386 participate in any activity or initiative resulting from the
387 collection, analysis, and reporting of the information to the
388 department pursuant to this section.

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389 **Section 9. Section 288.013, Florida Statutes, is created**
390 **to read:**

391 288.013 Office of Rural Prosperity.-

392 (1) The Legislature finds that the unique characteristics
393 and nature of the rural communities in this state are integral
394 to making this state an attractive place to visit, work, and
395 live. Further, the Legislature finds that building a prosperous
396 rural economy and vibrant rural communities is in the best
397 interest of this state. Rural prosperity is integral to
398 supporting this state's infrastructure, housing, and
399 agricultural and food-processing needs, as well as promoting the
400 health and advancement of the overall economy of this state. It
401 is of importance to the state that its rural areas are able to
402 grow, whether locally or in regional partnerships. To better
403 serve rural communities, and in recognition of rural Florida's
404 unique challenges and opportunities, the Office of Rural
405 Prosperity is established to ensure these efforts are
406 coordinated, focused, and effective.

407 (2) The Office of Rural Prosperity is created within the
408 Department of Commerce for the purpose of supporting rural
409 communities by helping rural stakeholders navigate available
410 programs and resources and representing rural interests across
411 state government.

412 (3) The Governor shall appoint a director to lead the
413 office, subject to confirmation by the Senate. The director

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414 shall report to the secretary of the department and shall serve
415 at the pleasure of the secretary.

416 (4) The office shall do all of the following:

417 (a) Serve as the state's point of contact for rural local
418 governments.

419 (b) Administer the Rural Economic Development Initiative
420 (REDI) pursuant to s. 288.0656.

421 (c) Provide training and technical assistance to rural
422 local governments on a broad range of community and economic
423 development activities. The training and technical assistance
424 may be offered using communications technology or in person and
425 must be recorded and posted to the office's website. The
426 training and technical assistance must include, at a minimum,
427 the following topics:

428 1. How to access state and federal resources, including
429 training on the online rural resource directory required under
430 paragraph (d).

431 2. Best practices relating to comprehensive planning,
432 economic development, and land development in rural communities.

433 3. Strategies to address management and administrative
434 capacity challenges unique to rural local governments.

435 4. Requirements of, and updates on recent changes to, the
436 Community Planning Act under s. 163.3161.

437 5. Updates on other recent state and federal laws
438 affecting rural local governments.

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439 (d) Create and maintain an online rural resource directory
440 to serve as an interactive tool to navigate the various state
441 and federal resources, tools, and services available to rural
442 local governments. The office shall regularly maintain the
443 resource directory and, to the greatest extent possible, include
444 up-to-date information on state and federal programs, resources,
445 tools, and services that address the needs of rural communities
446 in all areas of governance. Each state agency shall routinely
447 provide information and updates to the office for maintenance of
448 the resource directory. The resource directory must allow users
449 to search by indicators, such as agency name, resource type, or
450 topic, and include a notification function to allow users to
451 receive alerts when new or modified resources are available. To
452 the greatest extent possible, the resource directory must
453 include information on financial match requirements for the
454 state and federal programs listed in the directory.

455 (5) (a) By October 1, 2025, the office shall establish and
456 staff seven regional rural community liaison centers across this
457 state for the purpose of providing specialized in-person state
458 support to local governments in rural areas of opportunity as
459 defined in s. 288.0656. The department shall by rule divide this
460 state into seven regions and assign a regional rural community
461 liaison center to each region. Each liaison center shall support
462 the local governments within its geographic territory and shall
463 be staffed with at least two full-time department personnel. At

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464 a minimum, liaison centers shall have the following powers,
465 duties, and functions:

466 1. Work with local governments to plan and achieve goals
467 for local or regional growth, economic development, and rural
468 prosperity.

469 2. Facilitate local government access to state and federal
470 resources, such as grants, loans, and other aid or resources.

471 3. Advise local governments on available waivers of
472 program requirements, including financial match waivers or
473 reductions, for projects using state or federal funds through
474 the Rural Economic Development Initiative under s. 288.0656.

475 4. Coordinate local government technical assistance needs
476 with the department and other state or federal agencies.

477 5. Promote model ordinances, policies, and strategies
478 related to economic development.

479 6. Assist local governments with regulatory and reporting
480 compliance.

481 (b) To the greatest extent possible, the regional rural
482 community liaison centers shall coordinate with local and
483 regional governmental entities, regional economic development
484 organizations as defined in s. 288.018, and other appropriate
485 entities to establish a network to foster community-driven
486 solutions that promote viable and sustainable rural communities.

487 (c) The regional rural community liaison centers shall
488 regularly engage with the Rural Economic Development Initiative

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489 established in s. 288.0656, and at least one staff member from
490 each liaison center shall attend, either in person or by means
491 of electronic communication, the monthly meetings required by s.
492 288.0656(6)(c).

493 (6) By December 1, 2025, and each year thereafter, the
494 director of the office shall submit to the Administration
495 Commission in the Executive Office of the Governor a written
496 report describing the office's operations and accomplishments
497 for the preceding year, inclusive of the Rural Economic
498 Development Initiative report required by s. 288.0656(8). In
499 consultation with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer
500 Services, the office shall also include in the annual report
501 recommendations for policies, programs, and funding to further
502 support the needs of rural communities in this state. The office
503 shall submit the annual report to the President of the Senate
504 and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by December 1 of
505 each year and publish the annual report on the office's website.
506 The director shall present, in person at the next scheduled
507 Administration Commission meeting, detailed information from the
508 annual report required by this subsection.

509 (7) (a) The Office of Program Policy Analysis and
510 Government Accountability (OPPAGA) shall review the
511 effectiveness of the office by December 15, 2026, and each year
512 thereafter until 2028. Beginning in 2029, OPPAGA shall review
513 and evaluate the office every 3 years and shall submit a report

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514 based on its findings. Each report must recommend policy and
515 statutory modifications for consideration by the Legislature.
516 OPPAGA shall submit each report to the President of the Senate
517 and the Speaker of the House of Representatives pursuant to the
518 schedule.

519 (b) OPPAGA shall review strategies implemented by other
520 states on rural community preservation, enhancement, and
521 revitalization and report on their effectiveness and potential
522 for implementation in this state. OPPAGA shall include its
523 findings in its report to the President of the Senate and the
524 Speaker of the House of Representatives by December 15, 2027,
525 and every 3 years thereafter.

526 (c)1. OPPAGA shall review each state-funded or state-
527 administered grant and loan program available to local
528 governments to:

529 a. Identify any specified local government financial match
530 requirements and whether any portion of a match may be waived or
531 is required to be waived, pursuant to law, and programs where a
532 financial match waiver may be appropriate for rural local
533 government applicants, if not contemplated by law.

534 b. Identify grant and loan application evaluation
535 criteria, including scoring procedures, for programs that may be
536 perceived to be overly burdensome for rural local government
537 applicants, and whether special accommodations or preferences
538 for rural local governments may be appropriate.

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539 2. OPPAGA shall produce a report based on its review and
540 submit the report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker
541 of the House of Representatives by December 15, 2026.

542 3. This paragraph expires June 30, 2027.

543 **Section 10. Section 288.014, Florida Statutes, is created**
544 **to read:**

545 288.014 Renaissance Grants Program.—

546 (1) The Legislature finds that it has traditionally
547 provided programs to assist rural communities with economic
548 development and enhance their ability to attract businesses and
549 that, by providing that extra component of economic viability,
550 rural communities are able to attract new businesses and grow
551 existing ones. However, the Legislature finds that a subset of
552 rural communities has decreased in population over the past
553 decade, contributing to a decline in local business activity and
554 economic development. The Legislature further finds that the
555 state must transform its assistance to these specific rural
556 communities to help them achieve a necessary precursor of
557 economic viability. The Legislature further finds that the
558 approach intended by the creation of renaissance grants is to
559 focus on reversing the economic deterioration in rural
560 communities by retaining and attracting residents by giving them
561 a reason to stay, which is the impetus of natural economic
562 growth, business opportunities, and increased quality of life.

563 (2) The Office of Rural Prosperity within the department

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564 shall administer the Renaissance Grants Program to provide block
565 grants to eligible counties. By October 1, 2025, the Office of
566 Economic and Demographic Research shall certify to the Office of
567 Rural Prosperity which counties are growth-impeded. For the
568 purposes of this section, "growth-impeded" means a county that,
569 as of the most recent population estimate, has had a declining
570 population over the last 10 years. After an initial
571 certification, the Office of Economic and Demographic Research
572 shall annually certify whether the county remains growth-
573 impeded, until the county has 3 consecutive years of population
574 growth. Upon such certification of population growth, the county
575 is eligible to participate in the program for 1 additional year
576 in order for the county to prepare for the end of block grant
577 funding.

578 (3) (a) Each participating county shall enter into an
579 agreement with the Office of Rural Prosperity to receive the
580 block grant. Each county has broad authority to design its
581 specific plan to achieve population growth within the broad
582 parameters identified in this section. The Office of Rural
583 Prosperity may not determine the manner in which the county
584 implements the block grant. However, regional rural community
585 liaison center staff shall provide assistance in developing the
586 county's plan, upon request.

587 (b) Each participating county shall report annually to the
588 Office of Rural Prosperity on activities undertaken,

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589 intergovernmental agreements entered into, and other information
590 as required by the office.

591 (c) Subject to appropriation, each participating county
592 may receive funding from funds appropriated to the program.
593 Counties participating in the program shall make all attempts to
594 limit expenses for administrative costs, consistent with the
595 need for prudent management and accountability in the use of
596 public funds. Each county may contribute other funds for block
597 grant purposes, including local, state, or federal grant funds,
598 or seek out in-kind or financial contributions from private or
599 public sources to assist in fulfilling the activities
600 undertaken.

601 (4) (a) A participating county shall hire and retain a
602 renaissance coordinator and may use block grant funds for this
603 purpose. The renaissance coordinator is responsible for:

604 1. Ensuring that block grant funds are used as provided in
605 this section;

606 2. Coordinating with other local governments, school
607 boards, Florida College System institutions, or other entities;
608 and

609 3. Reporting as necessary to the state, including
610 information necessary pursuant to subsection (7).

611 (b) The Office of Rural Prosperity regional rural
612 community liaison center staff shall provide assistance, upon
613 request, and training to the renaissance coordinator to ensure

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614 successful implementation of the block grant.

615 (5) A participating county shall design a plan to make
616 targeted investments in the community to achieve population
617 growth and increase the economic vitality of the community. The
618 plan must include the following key features for use of the
619 state support:

620 (a) Technology centers with extended hours located within
621 schools or on school premises, administered by the local school
622 board, for such schools which provide extended hours and support
623 for access by students.

624 (b) Facilities that colocate adult day care with child
625 care facilities. The site-sharing facilities must be managed to
626 also provide opportunities for direct interaction between
627 generations and increase the health and well-being of both
628 younger and older participants, reduce social isolation, and
629 create cost and time efficiencies for working family members.
630 The regional rural community liaison center staff of the Office
631 of Rural Prosperity shall assist the county, upon request, with
632 bringing to the Rural Economic Development Initiative or
633 directly to the appropriate state agency recommendations
634 necessary to streamline any required state permits, licenses,
635 regulations, or other requirements.

636 (c) Technology labs managed in agreement with the nearest
637 Florida College System institution or a career center as
638 established under s. 1001.44. Repurposing vacant industrial

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639 sites or existing office space must be given priority in the
640 selection of lab locations. Each local technology lab must be
641 staffed and open for extended hours with the capacity to
642 provide:

643 1. Access to trainers and equipment necessary for users to
644 earn various certificates or online degrees in technology;

645 2. Hands-on assistance with applying for appropriate
646 remote work opportunities; and

647 3. Studio space with equipment for graduates and other
648 qualifying residents to perform remote work that is based on the
649 use of technology. Collaboration with community partners,
650 including the local workforce development board as described in
651 s. 445.007, to provide training opportunities, in-kind support
652 such as transportation to and from the lab, financing of
653 equipment for in-home use, or basic maintenance of such
654 equipment is required.

655 (6) In addition to the hiring of a renaissance
656 coordinator, a participating county shall develop
657 intergovernmental agreements for shared responsibilities with
658 its municipalities, school board, and Florida College System
659 institution or career center and enter into necessary contracts
660 with providers and community partners in order to implement the
661 plan.

662 (7) (a) Every 2 years, the Auditor General shall conduct an
663 operational audit as defined in s. 11.45 of each county's grant

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664 activities, beginning in 2026.

665 (b) On December 31, 2026, and every year thereafter, the
666 Office of Economic and Demographic Research shall submit an
667 annual report of renaissance block grant recipients by county to
668 the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of
669 Representatives. The report must provide key economic indicators
670 that measure progress in altering longer-term trends in the
671 county. The Office of Rural Prosperity shall provide the Office
672 of Economic and Demographic Research with information as
673 requested to complete the report.

674 (8) Notwithstanding s. 216.301, funds appropriated for the
675 purposes of this section are not subject to reversion.

676 (9) This section expires June 30, 2040.

677 **Section 11. Section 288.0175, Florida Statutes, is created**
678 **to read:**

679 288.0175 Public Infrastructure Smart Technology Grant
680 Program.—

681 (1) The Public Infrastructure Smart Technology Grant
682 Program is established within the Office of Rural Prosperity
683 within the department to fund and support the development of
684 public infrastructure smart technology projects in communities
685 located in rural areas of opportunity, subject to legislative
686 appropriation.

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

688 (a) "Public infrastructure smart technology" means systems

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689 and applications that use connectivity, data analytics, and
690 automation to improve public infrastructure by increasing
691 efficiency, enhancing public services, and promoting sustainable
692 development.

693 (b) "Rural area of opportunity" has the same meaning as in
694 s. 288.0656.

695 (c) "Smart technology lead organization" means a not-for-
696 profit corporation organized under s. 501(c)(3) of the Internal
697 Revenue Code which has been in existence for at least 3 years
698 and specializes in smart region planning.

699 (3) (a) The Office of Rural Prosperity shall contract with
700 one or more smart technology lead organizations to administer
701 the grant program for the purpose of deploying public
702 infrastructure smart technology in rural communities. In
703 accordance with the terms required by the office, the smart
704 technology lead organization shall provide grants to counties
705 and municipalities located within a rural area of opportunity
706 for public infrastructure smart technology projects.

707 (b) The office's contract with a smart technology lead
708 organization must specify the contract deliverables, including
709 financial reports and other reports due the office, timeframes
710 for achieving contractual obligations, and any other
711 requirements the office determines are necessary. The contract
712 must require the smart technology lead organization to do the
713 following:

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714 1. Collaborate with counties and municipalities located in
715 rural areas of opportunity to identify opportunities for local
716 governments to institute cost-effective smart technology
717 solutions for improving public services and infrastructure.

718 2. Provide technical assistance to counties and
719 municipalities located in rural areas of opportunity in
720 developing plans for public infrastructure smart technology
721 projects.

722 3. Assist counties and municipalities located in rural
723 areas of opportunity in connecting with other communities,
724 companies, and other entities to leverage the impact of each
725 public infrastructure smart technology project.

726 (4) The office shall include in its annual report required
727 by s. 288.013(6) a description of the projects funded under this
728 section.

729 **Section 12. Subsections (1), (2), and (4) of section**
730 **288.018, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

731 288.018 Regional Rural Development Grants Program.—

732 (1)(a) For the purposes of this section, the term
733 "regional economic development organization" means an economic
734 development organization located in or contracted to serve a
735 rural area of opportunity, as defined in s. 288.0656 ~~s.~~
736 ~~288.0656(2)(d)~~.

737 (b) Subject to appropriation, the Office of Rural
738 Prosperity ~~department~~ shall establish a grant program to provide

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739 funding to regional economic development organizations for the
740 purpose of building the professional capacity of those
741 organizations. Building the professional capacity of a regional
742 economic development organization includes hiring professional
743 staff to develop, deliver, and provide needed economic
744 development professional services, including technical
745 assistance, education and leadership development, marketing, and
746 project recruitment. Grants may also be used by a regional
747 economic development organization to provide technical
748 assistance to local governments, local economic development
749 organizations, and existing and prospective businesses.

750 (c) A regional economic development organization may apply
751 annually to the office department for a grant. The office
752 ~~department~~ is authorized to approve, on an annual basis, grants
753 to such regional economic development organizations. Subject to
754 appropriation, the office may award ~~maximum amount~~ an
755 organization ~~may receive in any year will be \$50,000, or~~
756 \$250,000 for any three regional economic development
757 organizations that serve an entire region of a rural area of
758 opportunity designated pursuant to s. 288.0656(7) if they are
759 recognized by the office department as serving such a region.

760 (2) In approving the participants, the office department
761 shall require the following:

762 (a) Documentation of official commitments of support from
763 each of the units of local government represented by the

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764 regional organization.

765 (b) Demonstration that the organization is in existence
766 and actively involved in economic development activities serving
767 the region.

768 (c) Demonstration of the manner in which the organization
769 is or will coordinate its efforts with those of other local and
770 state organizations.

771 (4) Except as otherwise provided in the General
772 Appropriations Act, the office department may expend up to
773 \$750,000 each fiscal year from funds appropriated ~~to the Rural~~
774 ~~Community Development Revolving Loan Fund~~ for the purposes
775 outlined in this section.

776 **Section 13. Section 288.019, Florida Statutes, is amended**
777 **to read:**

778 288.019 Rural considerations in grant review and
779 evaluation processes; financial match waiver or reduction.-

780 (1) Notwithstanding any other law, and to the fullest
781 extent possible, each agency and organization ~~the member~~
782 ~~agencies and organizations~~ of the Rural Economic Development
783 Initiative (REDI) as defined in s. 288.0656 ~~s. 288.0656(6)(a)~~
784 shall review:

785 (a) All grant and loan application evaluation criteria and
786 scoring procedures to ensure the fullest access for rural
787 communities ~~counties~~ as defined in s. 288.0656 ~~s. 288.0656(2)~~ to
788 resources available throughout the state; and

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789 (b) The financial match requirements for projects in rural
790 communities.

791 (2)-(1) Each REDI agency and organization shall consider
792 the impact on and ability of rural communities to meet and be
793 competitive under such criteria, scoring, and requirements. Upon
794 review, each REDI agency and organization shall ~~review all~~
795 evaluation and scoring procedures and develop a proposal for
796 modifications to those procedures which minimize the financial
797 and resource impact to a rural community, including waiver or
798 reduction of any required financial match requirements ~~impact of~~
799 a project within a rural area.

800 (a)-(2) Evaluation criteria and scoring procedures must
801 provide for an appropriate ranking, when ranking is a component
802 of the program, based on the proportionate impact that projects
803 have on a rural area when compared with similar project impacts
804 on an urban area. Additionally,

805 (3) evaluation criteria and scoring procedures must
806 recognize the disparity of available fiscal resources for an
807 equal level of financial support from an urban county or
808 municipality and a rural county or municipality.

809 (a) The evaluation criteria should weight contribution in
810 proportion to the amount of funding available at the local
811 level.

812 (b) Match requirements must be waived or reduced for rural
813 communities. When appropriate, an in-kind match must ~~should~~ be

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814 allowed and applied as a financial match when a rural community
815 county is experiencing economic financial distress as defined in
816 s. 288.0656 ~~through elevated unemployment at a rate in excess of~~
817 ~~the state's average by 5 percentage points or because of the~~
818 ~~loss of its ad valorem base.~~ Donations of land, though usually
819 not recognized as an in-kind match, may be treated as such. As
820 appropriate, each agency and organization that applies for or
821 receives federal funding must request federal approval to waive
822 or reduce the financial match requirements, if any, for projects
823 in rural communities.

824 ~~(3)-(4) For existing programs, The proposal modified~~
825 ~~evaluation criteria and scoring procedure must be submitted~~
826 ~~delivered to the Office of Rural Prosperity department for~~
827 ~~distribution to the REDI agencies and organizations. The REDI~~
828 ~~agencies and organizations shall review and make comments and~~
829 ~~recommendations that. Future rules, programs, evaluation~~
830 ~~criteria, and scoring processes must be brought before a REDI~~
831 ~~meeting for review, discussion, and recommendation to allow~~
832 ~~rural communities counties~~ fuller access to the state's
833 resources.

834 (4) Each REDI agency and organization shall ensure that
835 related administrative rules or policies are modified, as
836 necessary, to reflect the finalized proposal and that
837 information about the authorized wavier or reduction is included
838 in the online rural resource directory of the Office of Rural

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839 Prosperity required in s. 288.013(4)(d).

840 (5) The rural liaison from the related regional district
841 shall assist the rural community to make requests of waiver or
842 reduction of match.

843 **Section 14. Subsection (3) is added to section 288.021,**
844 **Florida Statutes, to read:**

845 288.021 Economic development liaison.—

846 (3) When practicable, the staff member appointed as the
847 economic development liaison shall also serve as the agency
848 representative for the Rural Economic Development Initiative
849 pursuant to s. 288.0656.

850 **Section 15. Section 288.065, Florida Statutes, is amended**
851 **to read:**

852 288.065 Rural Community Development Revolving Loan Fund.—

853 (1) The Rural Community Development Revolving Loan Fund
854 Program is established within the Office of Rural Prosperity
855 ~~department~~ to facilitate the use of existing federal, state, and
856 local financial resources by providing local governments with
857 financial assistance to further promote the economic viability
858 of rural communities. These funds may be used to finance
859 initiatives directed toward maintaining or developing the
860 economic base of rural communities, especially initiatives
861 addressing employment opportunities for residents of these
862 communities.

863 (2) (a) The program shall provide for long-term loans, loan

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864 guarantees, and loan loss reserves to units of local
865 governments, or economic development organizations substantially
866 underwritten by a unit of local government.~~7~~

867 (b) For purposes of this section, the term "unit of local
868 government" means:

869 1. A county ~~within counties~~ with a population ~~populations~~
870 of 75,000 or less. ~~fewer, or within any~~

871 2. A county with a population of 125,000 or less ~~fewer~~
872 which is contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000 or
873 less. ~~fewer~~

874 3. A municipality within a county described in
875 subparagraph 1. or subparagraph 2.

876 4. A county or municipality within a rural area of
877 opportunity.

878

879 For purposes of this paragraph, population is determined in
880 accordance with the most recent official estimates pursuant to
881 s. 186.901 and must include those residing in incorporated and
882 unincorporated areas of a county, ~~based on the most recent~~
883 ~~official population estimate as determined under s. 186.901,~~
884 ~~including those residing in incorporated areas and those~~
885 ~~residing in unincorporated areas of the county, or to units of~~
886 ~~local government, or economic development organizations~~
887 ~~substantially underwritten by a unit of local government, within~~
888 ~~a rural area of opportunity.~~

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889 ~~(c)-(b)~~ Requests for loans must ~~shall~~ be made by
890 application to the office ~~department~~. Loans must ~~shall~~ be made
891 pursuant to agreements specifying the terms and conditions
892 agreed to between the applicant and the office ~~department~~. The
893 loans are ~~shall be~~ the legal obligations of the applicant.

894 ~~(d)-(e)~~ All repayments of principal and interest shall be
895 returned to the loan fund and made available for loans to other
896 applicants. However, in a rural area of opportunity designated
897 under s. 288.0656 ~~by the Governor~~, and upon approval by the
898 office ~~department~~, repayments of principal and interest may be
899 retained by the applicant if such repayments are dedicated and
900 matched to fund regionally based economic development
901 organizations representing the rural area of opportunity.

902 (3) The office ~~department~~ shall manage the fund,
903 establishing loan practices that must include, but are not
904 limited to, procedures for establishing loan interest rates,
905 uses of funding, application procedures, and application review
906 procedures. The office ~~has department~~ ~~shall have~~ final approval
907 authority for any loan under this section.

908 (4) Notwithstanding ~~the provisions of~~ s. 216.301, funds
909 appropriated for this loan fund ~~may purpose~~ ~~shall~~ not be subject
910 to reversion.

911 (5) The office shall include in its annual report required
912 under s. 288.013 detailed information about the fund, including
913 loans made during the previous fiscal year, loans active, loans

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914 terminated or repaid, and the amount of funds not obligated as
915 of 14 days before the date the report is due.

916 **Section 16. Subsections (1), (2), and (3) of section**
917 **288.0655, Florida Statutes, are amended, and subsection (6) is**
918 **added to that section, to read:**

919 288.0655 Rural Infrastructure Fund.—

920 (1) There is created within the Office of Rural Prosperity
921 ~~department~~ the Rural Infrastructure Fund to facilitate the
922 planning, preparing, and financing of infrastructure projects in
923 rural communities which will encourage job creation, capital
924 investment, and the strengthening and diversification of rural
925 economies by promoting tourism, trade, and economic development.
926 Subject to appropriation, grants under this program may be
927 awarded to a unit of local government within a rural community
928 or rural area of opportunity as defined in s. 288.0656; or to a
929 regional economic development organization, a unit of local
930 government, or an economic development organization
931 substantially underwritten by a unit of local government for an
932 infrastructure project located within an unincorporated area
933 that has a population of 15,000 or less, has been in existence
934 for 100 years or more, is contiguous to a rural community, and
935 has been adversely affected by a natural disaster or presents a
936 unique economic development opportunity of regional impact.

937 (2) (a) Funds appropriated by the Legislature shall be
938 distributed by the office ~~department~~ through grant programs that

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939 maximize the use of federal, local, and private resources,
940 including, but not limited to, those available under the Small
941 Cities Community Development Block Grant Program.

942 (b) To facilitate access of rural communities and rural
943 areas of opportunity as defined by the Rural Economic
944 Development Initiative to infrastructure funding programs of the
945 Federal Government, such as those offered by the United States
946 Department of Agriculture and the United States Department of
947 Commerce, and state programs, including those offered by Rural
948 Economic Development Initiative agencies, and to facilitate
949 local government or private infrastructure funding efforts, the
950 office ~~department~~ may award grants for up to 75 percent of the
951 total infrastructure project cost, or up to 100 percent of the
952 total infrastructure project cost for a project located in a
953 rural community as defined in s. 288.0656(2) which is also
954 located in a fiscally constrained county as defined in s.
955 218.67(1) or a rural area of opportunity as defined in s.
956 288.0656(2). Eligible uses of funds may include improving any
957 inadequate infrastructure that has resulted in regulatory action
958 that prohibits economic or community growth and reducing the
959 costs to community users of proposed infrastructure improvements
960 that exceed such costs in comparable communities. Eligible uses
961 of funds include improvements to public infrastructure for
962 industrial or commercial sites and upgrades to or development of
963 public tourism infrastructure. Authorized infrastructure may

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964 include the following public or public-private partnership
965 facilities: storm water systems; telecommunications facilities;
966 roads or other remedies to transportation impediments; nature-
967 based tourism facilities; or other physical requirements
968 necessary to facilitate tourism, trade, and economic development
969 activities in the community. Authorized infrastructure may also
970 include publicly or privately owned self-powered nature-based
971 tourism facilities, publicly owned telecommunications
972 facilities, and additions to the distribution facilities of the
973 existing natural gas utility as defined in s. 366.04(3)(c), the
974 existing electric utility as defined in s. 366.02, or the
975 existing water or wastewater utility as defined in s.
976 367.021(12), or any other existing water or wastewater facility,
977 which owns a gas or electric distribution system or a water or
978 wastewater system in this state when:

979 1. A contribution-in-aid of construction is required to
980 serve public or public-private partnership facilities under the
981 tariffs of any natural gas, electric, water, or wastewater
982 utility as defined herein; and

983 2. Such utilities as defined herein are willing and able
984 to provide such service.

985 (c) The office department may award grants of up to
986 \$300,000 for infrastructure feasibility studies, design and
987 engineering activities, or other infrastructure planning and
988 preparation or site readiness activities. Site readiness

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989 expenses may include clearing title, surveys, permitting,
990 environmental studies, and regulatory compliance costs. Grants
991 awarded under this paragraph may be used in conjunction with
992 grants awarded under paragraph (b). In evaluating applications
993 under this paragraph, the office ~~department~~ shall consider the
994 extent to which the application seeks to minimize administrative
995 and consultant expenses.

996 (d) The office ~~department~~ shall participate in a
997 memorandum of agreement with the United States Department of
998 Agriculture under which state funds available through the Rural
999 Infrastructure Fund may be advanced, in excess of the prescribed
1000 state share, for a project that has received from the United
1001 States Department of Agriculture a preliminary determination of
1002 eligibility for federal financial support. State funds in excess
1003 of the prescribed state share which are advanced pursuant to
1004 this paragraph and the memorandum of agreement shall be
1005 reimbursed when funds are awarded under an application for
1006 federal funding.

1007 (e) To enable local governments to access the resources
1008 available pursuant to s. 403.973(17), the office ~~department~~ may
1009 award grants for surveys, feasibility studies, and other
1010 activities related to the identification and preclearance review
1011 of land which is suitable for preclearance review. Authorized
1012 grants under this paragraph may not exceed \$75,000 each, except
1013 in the case of a project in a rural area of opportunity, in

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1014 which case the grant may not exceed \$300,000. Any funds awarded
1015 under this paragraph must be matched at a level of 50 percent
1016 with local funds, except that any funds awarded for a project in
1017 a rural area of opportunity do not require a match of local
1018 funds. ~~If an application for funding is for a catalyst site, as~~
1019 ~~defined in s. 288.0656, the requirement for local match may be~~
1020 ~~waived pursuant to the process in s. 288.06561.~~ In evaluating
1021 applications under this paragraph, the office department shall
1022 consider the extent to which the application seeks to minimize
1023 administrative and consultant expenses.

1024 (3) The office department, in consultation with the
1025 Department of Transportation Florida Tourism Industry Marketing
1026 Corporation, the Department of Environmental Protection, and the
1027 Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, as
1028 appropriate, shall review and certify applications pursuant to
1029 s. 288.061. The review must include an evaluation of the
1030 economic benefit and long-term viability. The office has
1031 ~~department shall have~~ final approval for any grant under this
1032 section.

1033 (6) The office shall include in its annual report required
1034 under s. 288.013 detailed information about the fund, including
1035 grants made for the year, grants active, grants terminated or
1036 complete, and the amount of funds not obligated as of 14 days
1037 before the date the report is due.

1038 **Section 17. Subsection (1), paragraphs (a), (b), and (e)**

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1039 **of subsection (2), subsections (3) and (6), paragraphs (b) and**
1040 **(c) of subsection (7), and subsection (8) of section 288.0656,**
1041 **Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

1042 288.0656 Rural Economic Development Initiative.—

1043 (1) (a) Recognizing that rural communities and regions
1044 continue to face extraordinary challenges in their efforts to
1045 significantly improve their economies, specifically in terms of
1046 personal income, job creation, average wages, and strong tax
1047 bases, it is the intent of the Legislature to encourage and
1048 facilitate the location and expansion of major economic
1049 development projects of significant scale in such rural
1050 communities. The Legislature finds that rural communities are
1051 the essential conduits for the economy's distribution,
1052 manufacturing, and food supply.

1053 (b) The Rural Economic Development Initiative, known as
1054 "REDI," is created within the Office of Rural Prosperity
1055 department, and all the participation of state and regional
1056 agencies listed in paragraph (6) (a) shall participate in this
1057 initiative is authorized.

1058 (2) As used in this section, the term:

1059 ~~(a) "Catalyst project" means a business locating or~~
1060 ~~expanding in a rural area of opportunity to serve as an economic~~
1061 ~~generator of regional significance for the growth of a regional~~
1062 ~~target industry cluster. The project must provide capital~~
1063 ~~investment on a scale significant enough to affect the entire~~

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1064 ~~region and result in the development of high wage and high skill~~
1065 ~~jobs.~~

1066 ~~(b) "Catalyst site" means a parcel or parcels of land~~
1067 ~~within a rural area of opportunity that has been prioritized as~~
1068 ~~a geographic site for economic development through partnerships~~
1069 ~~with state, regional, and local organizations. The site must be~~
1070 ~~reviewed by REDI and approved by the department for the purposes~~
1071 ~~of locating a catalyst project.~~

1072 ~~(c)-(e)~~ "Rural community" means:

1073 1. A county with a population of 75,000 or less ~~fewer~~.

1074 2. A county with a population of 125,000 or less ~~fewer~~

1075 which is contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000 or
1076 less ~~fewer~~.

1077 3. A municipality within a county described in
1078 subparagraph 1. or subparagraph 2.

1079 4. An unincorporated federal enterprise community or an
1080 incorporated rural city with a population of 25,000 or less
1081 ~~fewer~~ and an employment base focused on traditional agricultural
1082 or resource-based industries, located in a county not defined as
1083 rural, which has at least three or more of the economic distress
1084 factors identified in paragraph (a) ~~paragraph (c)~~ and verified
1085 by the office ~~department~~.

1086

1087 For purposes of this paragraph, population shall be determined
1088 in accordance with the most recent official estimate pursuant to

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1089 s. 186.901.

1090 (3) REDI shall be responsible for coordinating and
1091 focusing the efforts and resources of state and regional
1092 agencies on the problems which affect the fiscal, economic, and
1093 community viability of Florida's ~~economically distressed~~ rural
1094 communities, working with local governments, community-based
1095 organizations, and private organizations that have an interest
1096 in the growth and development of these communities to find ways
1097 to balance environmental and growth management issues with local
1098 needs.

1099 (6) (a) By August 1 of each year, the head of each of the
1100 following agencies and organizations shall designate a deputy
1101 secretary or higher-level staff person from within the agency or
1102 organization to serve as the REDI representative for the agency
1103 or organization:

- 1104 1. The Department of Transportation.
- 1105 2. The Department of Environmental Protection.
- 1106 3. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.
- 1107 4. The Department of State.
- 1108 5. The Department of Health.
- 1109 6. The Department of Children and Families.
- 1110 7. The Department of Corrections.
- 1111 8. The Department of Education.
- 1112 9. The Department of Juvenile Justice.
- 1113 10. The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

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- 1114 11. Each water management district.
1115 12. CareerSource Florida, Inc.
1116 13. VISIT Florida.
1117 14. The Florida Regional Planning Council Association.
1118 15. The Agency for Health Care Administration.
1119 16. The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences
1120 (IFAS).

1121 (b) An alternate for each designee must ~~shall~~ also be
1122 chosen, who must also be a deputy secretary or higher-level
1123 staff person, and the names of the designees and alternates must
1124 ~~shall~~ be reported sent to the director of the Office of Rural
1125 Prosperity. At least one rural liaison from each regional rural
1126 community liaison center must participate in the REDI meetings
1127 Secretary of Commerce.

1128 (c) REDI shall meet at least each month, but may meet more
1129 often as necessary. Each REDI representative, or his or her
1130 designee, shall be physically present or available by means of
1131 electronic communication for each meeting.

1132 (d) ~~(b)~~ Each REDI representative must have comprehensive
1133 knowledge of his or her agency's functions, both regulatory and
1134 service in nature, and of the state's economic goals, policies,
1135 and programs. This person shall be the primary point of contact
1136 for his or her agency with REDI on issues and projects relating
1137 to ~~economically distressed~~ rural communities and with regard to
1138 expediting project review, shall ensure a prompt effective

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1139 response to problems arising with regard to rural issues, and
1140 shall work closely with the other REDI representatives in the
1141 identification of opportunities for preferential awards of
1142 program funds, contractual or other agreement provisions which
1143 meet the requirements of s. 215.971, and allowances and waiver
1144 of program requirements when necessary to encourage and
1145 facilitate ~~long-term private~~ capital investment and job
1146 creation.

1147 (e) ~~(e)~~ The REDI representatives shall work with REDI in
1148 the review and evaluation of statutes and rules for adverse
1149 impact on rural communities and the development of alternative
1150 proposals to mitigate that impact.

1151 (f) ~~(d)~~ Each REDI representative shall be responsible for
1152 ensuring that each district office or facility of his or her
1153 agency is informed quarterly about the Rural Economic
1154 Development Initiative and for providing assistance throughout
1155 the agency in the implementation of REDI activities.

1156 (7)

1157 (b) Designation as a rural area of opportunity under this
1158 subsection shall be contingent upon the execution of a
1159 memorandum of agreement among the office ~~department~~; the
1160 governing body of the county; and the governing bodies of any
1161 municipalities to be included within a rural area of
1162 opportunity. Such agreement shall specify the terms and
1163 conditions of the designation, including, but not limited to,

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1164 the duties and responsibilities of the county and any
1165 participating municipalities to take actions designed to
1166 facilitate the retention and expansion of existing businesses in
1167 the area, as well as the recruitment of new businesses to the
1168 area.

1169 ~~(c) Each rural area of opportunity may designate catalyst~~
1170 ~~projects, provided that each catalyst project is specifically~~
1171 ~~recommended by REDI and confirmed as a catalyst project by the~~
1172 ~~department. All state agencies and departments shall use all~~
1173 ~~available tools and resources to the extent permissible by law~~
1174 ~~to promote the creation and development of each catalyst project~~
1175 ~~and the development of catalyst sites.~~

1176 (8) REDI shall submit a report to the Office of Rural
1177 Prosperity ~~department~~ on all REDI activities for the previous
1178 fiscal year as a supplement to the office's department's annual
1179 report required under s. 288.013 ~~s. 20.60~~. This supplementary
1180 report must include:

1181 (a) A status report on every project ~~all projects~~
1182 currently being coordinated through REDI, the number of
1183 preferential awards and allowances made pursuant to this section
1184 in detail by award, allowance, or match type, the dollar amount
1185 of such awards, and the names of the recipients.

1186 (b) A description of all waivers of program requirements
1187 granted, including a list by program of each waiver that was
1188 granted. If waivers were requested but were not granted, a list

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1189 of ungranted waivers, including reasons why the waivers were not
1190 granted, must be included.

1191 (c) Detailed information as to the economic impact of the
1192 projects coordinated by REDI.

1193 (d) Recommendations based on the review and evaluation of
1194 statutes and rules having an adverse impact on rural communities
1195 and proposals to mitigate such adverse impacts.

1196 (e) Legislative recommendations for statutory waivers or
1197 reductions of specified economic development program
1198 requirements, including financial match waivers or reductions,
1199 for applicants within rural areas of opportunity.

1200 (f) Outcomes of proposals submitted pursuant to s.
1201 288.019.

1202 **Section 18.** Section 288.06561, Florida Statutes, is
1203 repealed.

1204 **Section 19. Subsections (2), (3), and (4) of section**
1205 **288.0657, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

1206 288.0657 Florida rural economic development strategy
1207 grants.—

1208 (2) The Office of Rural Prosperity shall provide
1209 ~~department may accept and administer moneys appropriated to the~~
1210 ~~department for providing grants to assist rural communities to~~
1211 ~~develop and implement strategic economic development plans.~~
1212 Grants may be provided to assist with costs associated with
1213 marketing a site to business and site selectors for an economic

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1214 development project that is part of an economic development
1215 plan, either as part of funding to develop and implement a plan
1216 or related to an already adopted plan.

1217 (3) A rural community, an economic development
1218 organization in a rural area, or a regional organization
1219 representing at least one rural community or such economic
1220 development organizations may apply for such grants. The rural
1221 liaison for the rural community shall assist those applying for
1222 such grants.

1223 (4) The office ~~department~~ shall establish criteria for
1224 reviewing grant applications. These criteria must ~~shall~~ include,
1225 but are not limited to, the degree of participation and
1226 commitment by the local community and the application's
1227 consistency with local comprehensive plans or the application's
1228 proposal to ensure such consistency. Grants for marketing may
1229 include funding for advertising campaign materials and costs
1230 associated with meetings, trade missions, and professional
1231 development affiliated with site preparation and marketing. The
1232 office ~~department~~ shall review each application for a grant. ~~The~~
1233 ~~department may approve grants only to the extent that funds are~~
1234 ~~appropriated for such grants by the Legislature.~~

1235 **Section 20. Paragraph (a) of subsection (13) of section**
1236 **288.1226, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

1237 288.1226 Florida Tourism Industry Marketing Corporation;
1238 use of property; board of directors; duties; audit.—

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1239 (13) FOUR-YEAR MARKETING PLAN.—

1240 (a) The corporation shall, in collaboration with the
1241 department, develop a 4-year marketing plan. At a minimum, the
1242 marketing plan must discuss the following:

1243 1. Continuation of overall tourism growth in this state.

1244 2. Expansion to new or under-represented tourist markets.

1245 3. Maintenance of traditional and loyal tourist markets.

1246 4. Coordination of efforts with county destination
1247 marketing organizations, other local government marketing
1248 groups, privately owned attractions and destinations, and other
1249 private sector partners to create a seamless, four-season
1250 advertising campaign for the state and its regions.

1251 5. Development of innovative techniques or promotions to
1252 build repeat visitation by targeted segments of the tourist
1253 population.

1254 6. Consideration of innovative sources of state funding
1255 for tourism marketing.

1256 7. Promotion of nature-based tourism, including, but not
1257 limited to, promotion of the Florida Greenways and Trails System
1258 as described under s. 260.014 and the Florida Shared-Use
1259 Nonmotorized Trail Network as described under s. 339.81.

1260 8. Coordination of efforts with the Office of Greenways
1261 and Trails of the Department of Environmental Protection and the
1262 department to promote and assist local communities, including,
1263 but not limited to, communities designated as trail towns by the

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1264 Office of Greenways and Trails, to maximize use of nearby trails
1265 as economic assets, including specific promotion of trail-based
1266 tourism.

1267 9. Promotion of heritage tourism.

1268 10. Development of a component to address emergency
1269 response to natural and manmade disasters from a marketing
1270 standpoint.

1271 11. Provision of appropriate marketing assistance
1272 resources to small, rural, and agritourism businesses located in
1273 this state. Such resources may include, but are not limited to,
1274 marketing plans, marketing assistance, promotional support,
1275 media development, technical expertise, marketing advice,
1276 technology training, and social marketing support.

1277 **Section 21.** Section 288.12266, Florida Statutes, is
1278 repealed.

1279 **Section 22. Paragraph (f) of subsection (2) and paragraphs**
1280 **(a), (b), and (c) of subsection (4) of section 288.9961, Florida**
1281 **Statutes, are amended, and subsections (6) and (7) are added to**
1282 **that section, to read:**

1283 288.9961 Promotion of broadband adoption; Florida Office
1284 of Broadband.—

1285 (2) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:

1286 (f) "Underserved" means a geographic area of this state in
1287 which there is no provider of broadband Internet service that
1288 offers a connection to the Internet with a capacity for

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1289 transmission at a consistent speed of at least 100 megabits per
1290 second downstream and at least 20 ~~10~~ megabits per second
1291 upstream.

1292 (4) FLORIDA OFFICE OF BROADBAND.—The Florida Office of
1293 Broadband is created within the Division of Community
1294 Development in the department for the purpose of developing,
1295 marketing, and promoting broadband Internet services in this
1296 state. The office, in the performance of its duties, shall do
1297 all of the following:

1298 (a) Create a strategic plan that has goals and strategies
1299 for increasing and improving the availability of, access to, and
1300 use of broadband Internet service in this state. In development
1301 of the plan, the department shall incorporate applicable federal
1302 broadband activities, including any efforts or initiatives of
1303 the Federal Communications Commission, to improve broadband
1304 Internet service in this state. The plan must identify available
1305 federal funding sources for the expansion or improvement of
1306 broadband. The strategic plan must be submitted to the Governor,
1307 the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of
1308 Representatives by June 30, 2022. The strategic plan must be
1309 updated biennially thereafter. The plan must include a process
1310 to review and verify public input regarding transmission speeds
1311 and availability of broadband Internet service throughout this
1312 state. The office shall consult with each regional rural
1313 community liaison center within the Office of Rural Prosperity

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1314 on the development and update of the plan.

1315 (b) Build and facilitate local technology planning teams
1316 or partnerships with members representing cross-sections of the
1317 community, which may include, but are not limited to,
1318 representatives from the following organizations and industries:
1319 libraries, K-12 education, colleges and universities, local
1320 health care providers, private businesses, community
1321 organizations, economic development organizations, local
1322 governments, tourism, parks and recreation, and agriculture. The
1323 local technology planning teams or partnerships shall work with
1324 rural communities to help the communities understand their
1325 current broadband availability, locate unserved and underserved
1326 businesses and residents, identify assets relevant to broadband
1327 deployment, build partnerships with broadband service providers,
1328 and identify opportunities to leverage assets and reduce
1329 barriers to the deployment of broadband Internet services in the
1330 community. The teams or partnerships must be proactive in rural
1331 communities as defined in s. 288.0656 ~~fiscally constrained~~
1332 ~~counties~~ in identifying and providing assistance, in
1333 coordination with the regional rural community liaison centers
1334 within the Office of Rural Prosperity, with applying for federal
1335 grants for broadband Internet service.

1336 (c) Provide technical and planning assistance to rural
1337 communities in coordination with the regional rural community
1338 liaison centers within the Office of Rural Prosperity.

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1339 (6) The office shall submit to the Governor, the President
1340 of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives a
1341 quarterly report detailing the implementation of broadband
1342 activities in rural, unserved, and underserved communities. Such
1343 information must be listed by county and include the amount of
1344 state and federal funds allocated and expended in the county by
1345 program; the progress toward deploying broadband in the county;
1346 any technical assistance provided; the activities of the local
1347 technology planning teams and partnerships; and the fulfillment
1348 of any other duties of the office required by this part.

1349 (7) By December 31 each year, the office shall submit to
1350 the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of
1351 the House of Representatives an annual report on the office's
1352 operations and accomplishments for that calendar year and the
1353 status of broadband Internet service access and use in this
1354 state. The report must also incorporate the quarterly reports on
1355 rural, unserved, and underserved communities required by
1356 subsection (6).

1357 **Section 23.** Section 290.06561, Florida Statutes, is
1358 repealed.

1359 **Section 24. Subsection (37) is added to section 334.044,**
1360 **Florida Statutes, to read:**

1361 334.044 Powers and duties of the department.—The
1362 department shall have the following general powers and duties:

1363 (37) To provide technical assistance and support from the

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1364 appropriate district of the department to counties that are not
1365 located in a metropolitan planning organization created pursuant
1366 to s. 339.175.

1367 **Section 25. Section 339.0801, Florida Statutes, is amended**
1368 **to read:**

1369 339.0801 Allocation of increased revenues derived from
1370 amendments to s. 319.32(5) (a) ~~by ch. 2012-128.~~

1371 (1) Funds that result from increased revenues to the State
1372 Transportation Trust Fund derived from the amendments to s.
1373 319.32(5) (a) made by s. 11, chapter 2012-128, Laws of Florida,
1374 ~~this act~~ must be used annually, first as set forth in paragraph
1375 (a) subsection (1) and then as set forth in paragraphs (b), (c),
1376 and (d) subsections (2)-(4), notwithstanding any other provision
1377 of law:

1378 (a)1.(1)(a) Beginning in the 2013-2014 fiscal year and
1379 annually for 30 years thereafter, \$10 million shall be for the
1380 purpose of funding any seaport project identified in the adopted
1381 work program of the Department of Transportation, to be known as
1382 the Seaport Investment Program.

1383 2.(b) The revenues may be assigned, pledged, or set aside
1384 as a trust for the payment of principal or interest on revenue
1385 bonds, or other forms of indebtedness issued by an individual
1386 port or appropriate local government having jurisdiction
1387 thereof, or collectively by interlocal agreement among any of
1388 the ports, or used to purchase credit support to permit such

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1389 borrowings. Alternatively, revenue bonds shall be issued by the
1390 Division of Bond Finance at the request of the Department of
1391 Transportation under the State Bond Act and shall be secured by
1392 such revenues as are provided in this subsection.

1393 3.(e) Revenue bonds or other indebtedness issued hereunder
1394 are not a general obligation of the state and are secured solely
1395 by a first lien on the revenues distributed under this
1396 subsection.

1397 4.(d) The state covenants with holders of the revenue
1398 bonds or other instruments of indebtedness issued pursuant to
1399 this subsection that it will not repeal this subsection; nor
1400 take any other action, including but not limited to amending
1401 this subsection, that will materially and adversely affect the
1402 rights of such holders so long as revenue bonds or other
1403 indebtedness authorized by this subsection are outstanding.

1404 5.(e) The proceeds of any revenue bonds or other
1405 indebtedness, after payment of costs of issuance and
1406 establishment of any required reserves, shall be invested in
1407 projects approved by the Department of Transportation and
1408 included in the department's adopted work program, by amendment
1409 if necessary. As required under s. 11(f), Art. VII of the State
1410 Constitution, the Legislature approves projects included in the
1411 department's adopted work program, including any projects added
1412 to the work program by amendment under s. 339.135(7).

1413 6.(f) Any revenues that are not used for the payment of

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1414 bonds as authorized by this subsection may be used for purposes
1415 authorized under the Florida Seaport Transportation and Economic
1416 Development Program. This revenue source is in addition to any
1417 amounts provided for and appropriated in accordance with ss.
1418 311.07 and 320.20(3) and (4).

1419 (b)(2) Beginning in the 2013-2014 fiscal year and annually
1420 thereafter, \$10 million shall be transferred to the
1421 Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund, to be used as specified
1422 in s. 427.0159.

1423 (c)(3) Beginning in the 2013-2014 fiscal year and annually
1424 thereafter, \$10 million shall be allocated to the Small County
1425 Outreach Program to be used as specified in s. 339.2818. These
1426 funds are in addition to the funds provided for the program
1427 pursuant to s. 201.15(4)(a)2.

1428 (d)(4) After the distributions required pursuant to
1429 paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) subsections (1)-(3), the remaining
1430 funds shall be used annually for transportation projects within
1431 this state for existing or planned strategic transportation
1432 projects which connect major markets within this state or
1433 between this state and other states, which focus on job
1434 creation, and which increase this state's viability in the
1435 national and global markets.

1436 (2) The remaining funds that result from increased revenue
1437 to the State Transportation Trust Fund derived pursuant to s.
1438 319.32(5)(a) must be used annually, notwithstanding any other

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1439 law, beginning in the 2025-2026 fiscal year and annually
1440 thereafter, for the Small County Road Assistance Program as
1441 prescribed in s. 339.2816.

1442 (3)-(5) Pursuant to s. 339.135(7), the department shall
1443 amend the work program to add the projects provided for in this
1444 section.

1445 **Section 26. Subsection (3) and paragraph (a) of subsection**
1446 **(4) of section 339.2816, Florida Statutes, are amended, and**
1447 **paragraph (c) of subsection (4) of that section is reenacted, to**
1448 **read:**

1449 339.2816 Small County Road Assistance Program.—

1450 (3) Subject to appropriation, beginning with fiscal year
1451 ~~1999-2000 until fiscal year 2009-2010, and beginning again with~~
1452 ~~fiscal year 2012-2013, up to~~ \$25 million annually from the State
1453 Transportation Trust Fund must ~~may~~ be used for the purposes of
1454 funding the Small County Road Assistance Program as described in
1455 this section. In addition, beginning with fiscal year 2025-2026,
1456 the department must use the additional revenues allocated by s.
1457 339.0801 for the Small County Road Assistance Program.

1458 (4) (a) Small counties shall be eligible to compete for
1459 funds that have been designated for the Small County Road
1460 Assistance Program for resurfacing or reconstruction projects on
1461 county roads that were part of the county road system on June
1462 10, 1995. Capacity improvements on county roads are ~~shall~~ not be
1463 eligible for funding under the program unless a safety issue

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1464 exists or the department finds it necessary to widen existing
1465 lanes as part of a resurfacing or reconstruction project.

1466 (c) The following criteria must be used to prioritize road
1467 projects for funding under the program:

1468 1. The primary criterion is the physical condition of the
1469 road as measured by the department.

1470 2. As secondary criteria the department may consider:

1471 a. Whether a road is used as an evacuation route.

1472 b. Whether a road has high levels of agricultural travel.

1473 c. Whether a road is considered a major arterial route.

1474 d. Whether a road is considered a feeder road.

1475 e. Whether a road is located in a fiscally constrained
1476 county, as defined in s. 218.67(1).

1477 f. Other criteria related to the impact of a project on
1478 the public road system or on the state or local economy as
1479 determined by the department.

1480 **Section 27. Subsection (3) of section 339.2817, Florida**
1481 **Statutes, is amended, and a new subsection (6) is added to that**
1482 **section, to read:**

1483 339.2817 County Incentive Grant Program.—

1484 (3) The department must consider, but is not limited to,
1485 the following criteria for evaluation of projects for County
1486 Incentive Grant Program assistance:

1487 (a) The extent to which the project will encourage,
1488 enhance, or create economic benefits;

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1489 (b) The likelihood that assistance would enable the
1490 project to proceed at an earlier date than the project could
1491 otherwise proceed;

1492 (c) The extent to which assistance would foster innovative
1493 public-private partnerships and attract private debt or equity
1494 investment;

1495 (d) The extent to which the project uses new technologies,
1496 including intelligent transportation systems, which enhance the
1497 efficiency of the project;

1498 (e) The extent to which the project enhances connectivity
1499 between rural agricultural areas and market distribution
1500 centers;

1501 (f)-(e) The extent to which the project helps to maintain
1502 or protect the environment; and

1503 (g)-(f) The extent to which the project includes
1504 transportation benefits for improving intermodalism and safety.

1505 (6) Beginning in the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the department
1506 shall give priority to a county located either wholly or
1507 partially within the Everglades Agricultural Area as defined in
1508 s. 373.4592(15) which, notwithstanding subsection (4), requests
1509 100 percent of the project costs for an eligible project that
1510 meets the criteria established in paragraph (3)(e). Requests
1511 under this subsection are subject to appropriation and limited
1512 to \$15 million annually. This subsection expires July 1, 2031.

1513 **Section 28. Subsections (1), (2), (3), (6), (7), and (8)**

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1514 **of section 339.2818, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

1515 339.2818 Small County Outreach Program.—

1516 (1) There is created within the department ~~of~~
1517 ~~Transportation~~ the Small County Outreach Program. The purpose of
1518 this program is to assist small county governments in repairing
1519 or rehabilitating county bridges, paving unpaved roads,
1520 addressing road-related drainage improvements, resurfacing or
1521 reconstructing county roads, or constructing capacity or safety
1522 improvements to county roads.

1523 (2) For the purposes of this section, the term "small
1524 county" means any county that has a population of 200,000 or
1525 less as determined by the most recent official population census
1526 determination estimate pursuant to s. 186.901.

1527 ~~(3) Funds allocated under this program, pursuant to s. 4,~~
1528 ~~ch. 2000-257, Laws of Florida, are in addition to any funds~~
1529 ~~provided pursuant to s. 339.2816, for the Small County Road~~
1530 ~~Assistance Program.~~

1531 ~~(5)-(6)~~ Funds paid into the State Transportation Trust Fund
1532 pursuant to ss. 201.15, 320.072, and 339.0801 ~~s. 201.15~~ for the
1533 purposes of the Small County Outreach Program may be ~~are hereby~~
1534 annually appropriated for expenditure to support the Small
1535 County Outreach Program.

1536 ~~(6)-(7)~~ Subject to a specific appropriation in addition to
1537 funds annually appropriated for projects under this section, a
1538 municipality within a rural area of opportunity or a rural area

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1539 of opportunity community designated under s. 288.0656(7) (a) may
1540 compete for the additional project funding using the criteria
1541 listed in subsection (3) ~~(4)~~ at up to 100 percent of project
1542 costs, excluding capacity improvement projects.

1543 ~~(8) Subject to a specific appropriation in addition to~~
1544 ~~funds appropriated for projects under this section, a local~~
1545 ~~government either wholly or partially within the Everglades~~
1546 ~~Agricultural Area as defined in s. 373.4592(15), the Peace River~~
1547 ~~Basin, or the Suwannee River Basin may compete for additional~~
1548 ~~funding using the criteria listed in paragraph (4) (c) at up to~~
1549 ~~100 percent of project costs on state or county roads used~~
1550 ~~primarily as farm-to-market connections between rural~~
1551 ~~agricultural areas and market distribution centers, excluding~~
1552 ~~capacity improvement projects.~~

1553 **Section 29. Section 339.68, Florida Statutes, is amended**
1554 **to read:**

1555 (Substantial rewording of section.

1556 See s. 339.68, F.S., for present text.)

1557 339.68 Florida Arterial Road Modernization Program.—

1558 (1) The Legislature finds that increasing demands continue
1559 to be placed on rural arterial roads in this state by a fast-
1560 growing economy, continued population growth, and increased
1561 tourism. Investment in the rural arterial roads of this state is
1562 needed to maintain the safety, mobility, reliability, and
1563 resiliency of the transportation system in order to support the

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1564 movement of people, goods, and commodities; to enhance economic
1565 prosperity and competitiveness; and to enrich the quality of
1566 life of the rural communities and the environment of this state.

1567 (2) The Florida Arterial Road Modernization Program is
1568 created within the department to make capacity and safety
1569 improvements to two-lane arterial roads or connect existing
1570 arterial roads located in rural communities. For purposes of
1571 this section, the term "rural community" has the same meaning as
1572 provided in s. 288.0656.

1573 (3) Subject to annual appropriation, beginning in the
1574 2025-2026 fiscal year, the department shall allocate from the
1575 State Transportation Trust Fund a minimum of \$50 million in each
1576 fiscal year for purposes of funding the program. This funding is
1577 in addition to any other funding provided to the program by any
1578 other law.

1579 (4) The department shall use the following criteria to
1580 prioritize projects for funding under the program:

1581 (a) Whether the road has documented safety concerns or
1582 requires additional safety and design improvements. This may be
1583 evidenced by the number of fatalities or crashes per vehicle
1584 mile traveled.

1585 (b) Whether the road has or is projected to have a
1586 significant amount of truck tractor traffic as determined by the
1587 department. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "truck
1588 tractor" has the same meaning as in s. 320.01(11).

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1589 (c) Whether the road is used to transport agricultural
1590 products and commodities from the farm to the market or other
1591 sale or distribution point.

1592 (d) Whether the road is used to transport goods to or from
1593 warehouses, distribution centers, or intermodal logistics
1594 centers as defined in s. 311.101(2).

1595 (e) Whether the road is used as an evacuation route.

1596 (f) Whether the physical condition of the road meets
1597 department standards.

1598 (g) Whether the road currently has, or is projected to
1599 have within the next 5 years, a level of service of D, E, or F.

1600 (h) Any other criteria related to the impact of a project
1601 on the public road system or on the state or local economy as
1602 determined by the department.

1603 (5) By January 1, 2027, and every 2 years thereafter, the
1604 department shall submit to the Governor, the President of the
1605 Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives a report
1606 regarding the use and condition of arterial roads located in
1607 rural communities, which report must include the following:

1608 (a) A map of roads located in rural communities which are
1609 designated as arterial roads.

1610 (b) A needs assessment that must include, but is not
1611 limited to, consideration of infrastructure improvements to
1612 improve capacity on arterial roads in rural communities.

1613 (c) A synopsis of the department's project prioritization

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1614 process.

1615 (d) An estimate of the local and state economic impact of
1616 improving capacity on arterial roads in rural communities.

1617 (e) A listing of the arterial roads and the associated
1618 improvements to be included in the program and a schedule or
1619 timeline for the inclusion of such projects in the work program.

1620 **Section 30.** (1) The Department of Transportation shall
1621 allocate funds to implement the Small County Road Assistance
1622 Program as created by s. 339.2816, Florida Statutes, and amend
1623 the current tentative work program for the 2025-2026 through
1624 2031-2032 fiscal years to include additional projects. In
1625 addition, before adoption of the work program, the department
1626 shall submit a budget amendment pursuant to s. 339.135(7),
1627 Florida Statutes, requesting budget authority necessary to
1628 implement the additional projects.

1629 (2) The department shall allocate sufficient funds to
1630 implement the Florida Arterial Road Modernization Program,
1631 develop a plan to expend the revenues as specified in s. 339.68,
1632 Florida Statutes, and, before its adoption, amend the current
1633 tentative work program for the 2025-2026 through 2031-2032
1634 fiscal years to include the program's projects. In addition,
1635 before adoption of the work program, the department shall submit
1636 a budget amendment pursuant to s. 339.135(7), Florida Statutes,
1637 requesting budget authority necessary to implement the program
1638 as specified in s. 339.68, Florida Statutes.

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1639 (3) Notwithstanding any other law, the increase in revenue
1640 to the State Transportation Trust Fund derived from the
1641 amendments to ss. 201.15 and 319.32, Florida Statutes, deposited
1642 into the trust fund pursuant to ss. 201.15 and 339.0801, Florida
1643 Statutes, shall be used by the department to fund the programs
1644 as specified in this section.

1645 **Section 31. Subsection (3) of section 420.9073, Florida**
1646 **Statutes, is amended to read:**

1647 420.9073 Local housing distributions.—

1648 (3) Calculation of guaranteed amounts:

1649 (a) The guaranteed amount under subsection (1) shall be
1650 calculated for each state fiscal year by multiplying \$1 million
1651 ~~\$350,000~~ by a fraction, the numerator of which is the amount of
1652 funds distributed to the Local Government Housing Trust Fund
1653 pursuant to s. 201.15(4)(c) and the denominator of which is the
1654 total amount of funds distributed to the Local Government
1655 Housing Trust Fund pursuant to s. 201.15. Awards under this
1656 subsection are subject to legislative appropriation.

1657 (b) The guaranteed amount under subsection (2) shall be
1658 calculated for each state fiscal year by multiplying \$1 million
1659 ~~\$350,000~~ by a fraction, the numerator of which is the amount of
1660 funds distributed to the Local Government Housing Trust Fund
1661 pursuant to s. 201.15(4)(d) and the denominator of which is the
1662 total amount of funds distributed to the Local Government
1663 Housing Trust Fund pursuant to s. 201.15.

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1664 **Section 32. Paragraph (n) of subsection (5) of section**
1665 **420.9075, Florida Statutes, is amended, paragraph (o) is added**
1666 **to that subsection, and paragraph (b) of subsection (13) of that**
1667 **section is reenacted, to read:**

1668 420.9075 Local housing assistance plans; partnerships.—

1669 (5) The following criteria apply to awards made to
1670 eligible sponsors or eligible persons for the purpose of
1671 providing eligible housing:

1672 (n) Funds from the local housing distribution not used to
1673 meet the criteria established in paragraph (a), ~~or~~ paragraph
1674 (c), or paragraph (o), or not used for the administration of a
1675 local housing assistance plan must be used for housing
1676 production and finance activities, including, but not limited
1677 to, financing preconstruction activities or the purchase of
1678 existing units, providing rental housing, and providing home
1679 ownership training to prospective home buyers and owners of
1680 homes assisted through the local housing assistance plan.

1681 1. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraphs (a) and
1682 (c), program income as defined in s. 420.9071(26) may also be
1683 used to fund activities described in this paragraph.

1684 2. When preconstruction due-diligence activities conducted
1685 as part of a preservation strategy show that preservation of the
1686 units is not feasible and will not result in the production of
1687 an eligible unit, such costs shall be deemed a program expense
1688 rather than an administrative expense if such program expenses

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1689 do not exceed 3 percent of the annual local housing
1690 distribution.

1691 3. If both an award under the local housing assistance
1692 plan and federal low-income housing tax credits are used to
1693 assist a project and there is a conflict between the criteria
1694 prescribed in this subsection and the requirements of s. 42 of
1695 the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, the county or
1696 eligible municipality may resolve the conflict by giving
1697 precedence to the requirements of s. 42 of the Internal Revenue
1698 Code of 1986, as amended, in lieu of following the criteria
1699 prescribed in this subsection with the exception of paragraphs
1700 (a) and (g) of this subsection.

1701 4. Each county and each eligible municipality may award
1702 funds as a grant for construction, rehabilitation, or repair as
1703 part of disaster recovery or emergency repairs or to remedy
1704 accessibility or health and safety deficiencies. Any other
1705 grants must be approved as part of the local housing assistance
1706 plan.

1707 (o) Notwithstanding paragraphs (a) and (c), up to 25
1708 percent of the funds made available in each county and eligible
1709 municipality from the local housing distribution may be used to
1710 preserve multifamily affordable rental housing funded through
1711 United States Department of Agriculture loans. These funds are
1712 subject to legislative appropriation and may be used to
1713 rehabilitate housing, extend affordability periods, or acquire

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1714 or transfer properties in partnership with private
1715 organizations. This paragraph expires on June 30, 2031.

1716 (13)

1717 (b) If, as a result of its review of the annual report,
1718 the corporation determines that a county or eligible
1719 municipality has failed to implement a local housing incentive
1720 strategy, or, if applicable, a local housing incentive plan, it
1721 shall send a notice of termination of the local government's
1722 share of the local housing distribution by certified mail to the
1723 affected county or eligible municipality.

1724 1. The notice must specify a date of termination of the
1725 funding if the affected county or eligible municipality does not
1726 implement the plan or strategy and provide for a local response.
1727 A county or eligible municipality shall respond to the
1728 corporation within 30 days after receipt of the notice of
1729 termination.

1730 2. The corporation shall consider the local response that
1731 extenuating circumstances precluded implementation and grant an
1732 extension to the timeframe for implementation. Such an extension
1733 shall be made in the form of an extension agreement that
1734 provides a timeframe for implementation. The chief elected
1735 official of a county or eligible municipality or his or her
1736 designee shall have the authority to enter into the agreement on
1737 behalf of the local government.

1738 3. If the county or the eligible municipality has not

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1739 implemented the incentive strategy or entered into an extension
1740 agreement by the termination date specified in the notice, the
1741 local housing distribution share terminates, and any uncommitted
1742 local housing distribution funds held by the affected county or
1743 eligible municipality in its local housing assistance trust fund
1744 shall be transferred to the Local Government Housing Trust Fund
1745 to the credit of the corporation to administer.

1746 4.a. If the affected local government fails to meet the
1747 timeframes specified in the agreement, the corporation shall
1748 terminate funds. The corporation shall send a notice of
1749 termination of the local government's share of the local housing
1750 distribution by certified mail to the affected local government.
1751 The notice shall specify the termination date, and any
1752 uncommitted funds held by the affected local government shall be
1753 transferred to the Local Government Housing Trust Fund to the
1754 credit of the corporation to administer.

1755 b. If the corporation terminates funds to a county, but an
1756 eligible municipality receiving a local housing distribution
1757 pursuant to an interlocal agreement maintains compliance with
1758 program requirements, the corporation shall thereafter
1759 distribute directly to the participating eligible municipality
1760 its share calculated in the manner provided in ss. 420.9072 and
1761 420.9073.

1762 c. Any county or eligible municipality whose local
1763 distribution share has been terminated may subsequently elect to

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1764 receive directly its local distribution share by adopting the
1765 ordinance, resolution, and local housing assistance plan in the
1766 manner and according to the procedures provided in ss. 420.907-
1767 420.9079.

1768 **Section 33. Subsection (3) of section 163.3187, Florida**
1769 **Statutes, is amended to read:**

1770 163.3187 Process for adoption of small scale comprehensive
1771 plan amendment.—

1772 (3) If the small scale development amendment involves a
1773 site within a rural area of opportunity as defined under s.
1774 288.0656 ~~s. 288.0656(2)(d)~~ for the duration of such designation,
1775 the acreage limit listed in subsection (1) shall be increased by
1776 100 percent. The local government approving the small scale plan
1777 amendment shall certify to the state land planning agency that
1778 the plan amendment furthers the economic objectives set forth in
1779 the executive order issued under s. 288.0656(7), and the
1780 property subject to the plan amendment shall undergo public
1781 review to ensure that all concurrency requirements and federal,
1782 state, and local environmental permit requirements are met.

1783 **Section 34. Section 212.205, Florida Statutes, is amended**
1784 **to read:**

1785 212.205 Sales tax distribution reporting.—By March 15 of
1786 each year, each person who received a distribution pursuant to
1787 s. 212.20(6)(d)7.b. and c. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.b. and c.~~ in the
1788 preceding calendar year shall report to the Office of Economic

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1789 and Demographic Research the following information:

1790 (1) An itemized accounting of all expenditures of the
1791 funds distributed in the preceding calendar year, including
1792 amounts spent on debt service.

1793 (2) A statement indicating what portion of the distributed
1794 funds have been pledged for debt service.

1795 (3) The original principal amount and current debt service
1796 schedule of any bonds or other borrowing for which the
1797 distributed funds have been pledged for debt service.

1798 **Section 35. Section 257.191, Florida Statutes, is amended**
1799 **to read:**

1800 257.191 Construction grants.—The Division of Library and
1801 Information Services may accept and administer library
1802 construction moneys appropriated to it and shall allocate such
1803 appropriation to municipal, county, and regional libraries in
1804 the form of library construction grants on a matching basis. The
1805 local matching portion shall be no less than the grant amount,
1806 on a dollar-for-dollar basis, up to the maximum grant amount,
1807 unless the matching requirement is waived pursuant to s. 288.019
1808 ~~by s. 288.06561~~. Initiation of a library construction project 12
1809 months or less prior to the grant award under this section does
1810 ~~shall~~ not affect the eligibility of an applicant to receive a
1811 library construction grant. The division shall adopt rules for
1812 the administration of library construction grants. For the
1813 purposes of this section, s. 257.21 does not apply.

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1814 **Section 36. Subsection (2) of section 257.193, Florida**
1815 **Statutes, is amended to read:**

1816 257.193 Community Libraries in Caring Program.—

1817 (2) The purpose of the Community Libraries in Caring
1818 Program is to assist libraries in rural communities, as defined
1819 in s. 288.0656(2) and subject to the provisions of s. 288.019 ~~s.~~
1820 ~~288.06561~~, to strengthen their collections and services, improve
1821 literacy in their communities, and improve the economic
1822 viability of their communities.

1823 **Section 37. Subsection (17) of section 265.283, Florida**
1824 **Statutes, is amended to read:**

1825 265.283 Definitions.—The following definitions shall apply
1826 to ss. 265.281-265.703:

1827 (17) "Underserved arts community assistance program
1828 grants" means grants used by qualified organizations under the
1829 Rural Economic Development Initiative, pursuant to s. 288.0656
1830 and subject to the provisions of s. 288.019 ~~ss. 288.0656 and~~
1831 ~~288.06561~~, for the purpose of economic and organizational
1832 development for underserved cultural organizations.

1833 **Section 38. Paragraphs (a) and (d) of subsection (3) of**
1834 **section 288.11621, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

1835 288.11621 Spring training baseball franchises.—

1836 (3) USE OF FUNDS.—

1837 (a) A certified applicant may use funds provided under s.
1838 212.20(6)(d)7.b. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.b.~~ only to:

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1839 1. Serve the public purpose of acquiring, constructing,
1840 reconstructing, or renovating a facility for a spring training
1841 franchise.

1842 2. Pay or pledge for the payment of debt service on, or to
1843 fund debt service reserve funds, arbitrage rebate obligations,
1844 or other amounts payable with respect thereto, bonds issued for
1845 the acquisition, construction, reconstruction, or renovation of
1846 such facility, or for the reimbursement of such costs or the
1847 refinancing of bonds issued for such purposes.

1848 3. Assist in the relocation of a spring training franchise
1849 from one unit of local government to another only if the
1850 governing board of the current host local government by a
1851 majority vote agrees to relocation.

1852 (d)1. All certified applicants must place unexpended state
1853 funds received pursuant to s. 212.20(6)(d)7.b. ~~s.~~
1854 ~~212.20(6)(d)6.b.~~ in a trust fund or separate account for use
1855 only as authorized in this section.

1856 2. A certified applicant may request that the Department
1857 of Revenue suspend further distributions of state funds made
1858 available under s. 212.20(6)(d)7.b. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.b.~~ for 12
1859 months after expiration of an existing agreement with a spring
1860 training franchise to provide the certified applicant with an
1861 opportunity to enter into a new agreement with a spring training
1862 franchise, at which time the distributions shall resume.

1863 3. The expenditure of state funds distributed to an

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1864 applicant certified before July 1, 2010, must begin within 48
1865 months after the initial receipt of the state funds. In
1866 addition, the construction of, or capital improvements to, a
1867 spring training facility must be completed within 24 months
1868 after the project's commencement.

1869 **Section 39. Paragraph (c) of subsection (2) and paragraphs**
1870 **(a), (c), and (d) of subsection (3) of section 288.11631,**
1871 **Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

1872 288.11631 Retention of Major League Baseball spring
1873 training baseball franchises.—

1874 (2) CERTIFICATION PROCESS.—

1875 (c) Each applicant certified on or after July 1, 2013,
1876 shall enter into an agreement with the department which:

1877 1. Specifies the amount of the state incentive funding to
1878 be distributed. The amount of state incentive funding per
1879 certified applicant may not exceed \$20 million. However, if a
1880 certified applicant's facility is used by more than one spring
1881 training franchise, the maximum amount may not exceed \$50
1882 million, and the Department of Revenue shall make distributions
1883 to the applicant pursuant to s. 212.20(6)(d)7.c. ~~s.~~

1884 ~~212.20(6)(d)6.c.~~

1885 2. States the criteria that the certified applicant must
1886 meet in order to remain certified. These criteria must include a
1887 provision stating that the spring training franchise must
1888 reimburse the state for any funds received if the franchise does

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1889 not comply with the terms of the contract. If bonds were issued
1890 to construct or renovate a facility for a spring training
1891 franchise, the required reimbursement must be equal to the total
1892 amount of state distributions expected to be paid from the date
1893 the franchise violates the agreement with the applicant through
1894 the final maturity of the bonds.

1895 3. States that the certified applicant is subject to
1896 decertification if the certified applicant fails to comply with
1897 this section or the agreement.

1898 4. States that the department may recover state incentive
1899 funds if the certified applicant is decertified.

1900 5. Specifies the information that the certified applicant
1901 must report to the department.

1902 6. Includes any provision deemed prudent by the
1903 department.

1904 (3) USE OF FUNDS.—

1905 (a) A certified applicant may use funds provided under s.
1906 212.20(6)(d)7.c. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.e.~~ only to:

1907 1. Serve the public purpose of constructing or renovating
1908 a facility for a spring training franchise.

1909 2. Pay or pledge for the payment of debt service on, or to
1910 fund debt service reserve funds, arbitrage rebate obligations,
1911 or other amounts payable with respect thereto, bonds issued for
1912 the construction or renovation of such facility, or for the
1913 reimbursement of such costs or the refinancing of bonds issued

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1914 for such purposes.

1915 (c) The Department of Revenue may not distribute funds
1916 under s. 212.20(6)(d)7.c. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.e.~~ until July 1,
1917 2016. Further, the Department of Revenue may not distribute
1918 funds to an applicant certified on or after July 1, 2013, until
1919 it receives notice from the department that:

1920 1. The certified applicant has encumbered funds under
1921 either subparagraph (a)1. or subparagraph (a)2.; and

1922 2. If applicable, any existing agreement with a spring
1923 training franchise for the use of a facility has expired.

1924 (d)1. All certified applicants shall place unexpended
1925 state funds received pursuant to s. 212.20(6)(d)7.c. ~~s.~~
1926 ~~212.20(6)(d)6.e.~~ in a trust fund or separate account for use
1927 only as authorized in this section.

1928 2. A certified applicant may request that the department
1929 notify the Department of Revenue to suspend further
1930 distributions of state funds made available under s.
1931 212.20(6)(d)7.c. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.e.~~ for 12 months after
1932 expiration of an existing agreement with a spring training
1933 franchise to provide the certified applicant with an opportunity
1934 to enter into a new agreement with a spring training franchise,
1935 at which time the distributions shall resume.

1936 3. The expenditure of state funds distributed to an
1937 applicant certified after July 1, 2013, must begin within 48
1938 months after the initial receipt of the state funds. In

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1939 addition, the construction or renovation of a spring training
1940 facility must be completed within 24 months after the project's
1941 commencement.

1942 **Section 40. Subsection (1) of section 443.191, Florida**
1943 **Statutes, is amended to read:**

1944 443.191 Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund;
1945 establishment and control.—

1946 (1) There is established, as a separate trust fund apart
1947 from all other public funds of this state, an Unemployment
1948 Compensation Trust Fund, which shall be administered by the
1949 Department of Commerce exclusively for the purposes of this
1950 chapter. The fund must consist of:

1951 (a) All contributions and reimbursements collected under
1952 this chapter;

1953 (b) Interest earned on any moneys in the fund;

1954 (c) Any property or securities acquired through the use of
1955 moneys belonging to the fund;

1956 (d) All earnings of these properties or securities;

1957 (e) All money credited to this state's account in the
1958 federal Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund under 42 U.S.C. s.
1959 1103;

1960 (f) All money collected for penalties imposed pursuant to
1961 s. 443.151(6) (a);

1962 (g) Advances on the amount in the federal Unemployment
1963 Compensation Trust Fund credited to the state under 42 U.S.C. s.

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1964 1321, as requested by the Governor or the Governor's designee;
1965 and

1966 (h) All money deposited in this account as a distribution
1967 pursuant to s. 212.20(6)(d)7.e. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.e.~~

1968

1969 Except as otherwise provided in s. 443.1313(4), all moneys in
1970 the fund must be mingled and undivided.

1971 **Section 41. Section 571.26, Florida Statutes, is amended**
1972 **to read:**

1973 571.26 Florida Agricultural Promotional Campaign Trust
1974 Fund.—There is hereby created the Florida Agricultural
1975 Promotional Campaign Trust Fund within the Department of
1976 Agriculture and Consumer Services to receive all moneys related
1977 to the Florida Agricultural Promotional Campaign. Moneys
1978 deposited in the trust fund shall be appropriated for the sole
1979 purpose of implementing the Florida Agricultural Promotional
1980 Campaign, except for money deposited in the trust fund pursuant
1981 to s. 212.20(6)(d)7.h. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.h.~~, which shall be held
1982 separately and used solely for the purposes identified in s.
1983 571.265.

1984 **Section 42. Subsection (2) of section 571.265, Florida**
1985 **Statutes, is amended to read:**

1986 571.265 Promotion of Florida thoroughbred breeding and of
1987 thoroughbred racing at Florida thoroughbred tracks; distribution
1988 of funds.—

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1989 (2) Funds deposited into the Florida Agricultural
1990 Promotional Campaign Trust Fund pursuant to s. 212.20(6)(d)7.f.
1991 ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.f.~~ shall be used by the department to encourage
1992 the agricultural activity of breeding thoroughbred racehorses in
1993 this state and to enhance thoroughbred racing conducted at
1994 thoroughbred tracks in this state as provided in this section.
1995 If the funds made available under this section are not fully
1996 used in any one fiscal year, any unused amounts shall be carried
1997 forward in the trust fund into future fiscal years and made
1998 available for distribution as provided in this section.

1999 **Section 43. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment**
2000 **made by this act to section 20.60, Florida Statutes, in a**
2001 **reference thereto, subsection (8) of section 288.9935, Florida**
2002 **Statutes, is reenacted to read:**

2003 288.9935 Microfinance Guarantee Program.—

2004 (8) The department must, in the department's report
2005 required under s. 20.60(10), include an annual report on the
2006 program. The report must, at a minimum, provide:

2007 (a) A comprehensive description of the program, including
2008 an evaluation of its application and guarantee activities,
2009 recommendations for change, and identification of any other
2010 state programs that overlap with the program;

2011 (b) An assessment of the current availability of and
2012 access to credit for entrepreneurs and small businesses in this
2013 state;

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2014 (c) A summary of the financial and employment results of
2015 the entrepreneurs and small businesses receiving loan
2016 guarantees, including the number of full-time equivalent jobs
2017 created as a result of the guaranteed loans and the amount of
2018 wages paid to employees in the newly created jobs;

2019 (d) Industry data about the borrowers, including the six-
2020 digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)
2021 code;

2022 (e) The name and location of lenders that receive loan
2023 guarantees;

2024 (f) The number of loan guarantee applications received;

2025 (g) The number, duration, location, and amount of
2026 guarantees made;

2027 (h) The number and amount of guaranteed loans outstanding,
2028 if any;

2029 (i) The number and amount of guaranteed loans with
2030 payments overdue, if any;

2031 (j) The number and amount of guaranteed loans in default,
2032 if any;

2033 (k) The repayment history of the guaranteed loans made;
2034 and

2035 (l) An evaluation of the program's ability to meet the
2036 financial performance measures and objectives specified in
2037 subsection (3).

2038 **Section 44. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment**

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2039 **made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a**
2040 **reference thereto, paragraph (c) of subsection (5) of section**
2041 **125.0104, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:**

2042 125.0104 Tourist development tax; procedure for levying;
2043 authorized uses; referendum; enforcement.—

2044 (5) AUTHORIZED USES OF REVENUE.—

2045 (c) A county located adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico or the
2046 Atlantic Ocean, except a county that receives revenue from taxes
2047 levied pursuant to s. 125.0108, which meets the following
2048 criteria may use up to 10 percent of the tax revenue received
2049 pursuant to this section to reimburse expenses incurred in
2050 providing public safety services, including emergency medical
2051 services as defined in s. 401.107(3), and law enforcement
2052 services, which are needed to address impacts related to
2053 increased tourism and visitors to an area. However, if taxes
2054 collected pursuant to this section are used to reimburse
2055 emergency medical services or public safety services for tourism
2056 or special events, the governing board of a county or
2057 municipality may not use such taxes to supplant the normal
2058 operating expenses of an emergency medical services department,
2059 a fire department, a sheriff's office, or a police department.
2060 To receive reimbursement, the county must:

2061 1.a. Generate a minimum of \$10 million in annual proceeds
2062 from any tax, or any combination of taxes, authorized to be
2063 levied pursuant to this section;

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2064 b. Have at least three municipalities; and

2065 c. Have an estimated population of less than 275,000,
2066 according to the most recent population estimate prepared
2067 pursuant to s. 186.901, excluding the inmate population; or

2068 2. Be a fiscally constrained county as described in s.
2069 218.67(1).

2070
2071 The board of county commissioners must by majority vote approve
2072 reimbursement made pursuant to this paragraph upon receipt of a
2073 recommendation from the tourist development council.

2074 **Section 45. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment**
2075 **made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a**
2076 **reference thereto, subsection (3) of section 193.624, Florida**
2077 **Statutes, is reenacted to read:**

2078 193.624 Assessment of renewable energy source devices.—

2079 (3) This section applies to the installation of a
2080 renewable energy source device installed on or after January 1,
2081 2013, to new and existing residential real property. This
2082 section applies to a renewable energy source device installed on
2083 or after January 1, 2018, to all other real property, except
2084 when installed as part of a project planned for a location in a
2085 fiscally constrained county, as defined in s. 218.67(1), and for
2086 which an application for a comprehensive plan amendment or
2087 planned unit development zoning has been filed with the county
2088 on or before December 31, 2017.

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2089 **Section 46. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment**
2090 **made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a**
2091 **reference thereto, subsection (2) of section 196.182, Florida**
2092 **Statutes, is reenacted to read:**

2093 196.182 Exemption of renewable energy source devices.—

2094 (2) The exemption provided in this section does not apply
2095 to a renewable energy source device that is installed as part of
2096 a project planned for a location in a fiscally constrained
2097 county, as defined in s. 218.67(1), and for which an application
2098 for a comprehensive plan amendment or planned unit development
2099 zoning has been filed with the county on or before December 31,
2100 2017.

2101 **Section 47. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment**
2102 **made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a**
2103 **reference thereto, subsection (1) of section 218.12, Florida**
2104 **Statutes, is reenacted to read:**

2105 218.12 Appropriations to offset reductions in ad valorem
2106 tax revenue in fiscally constrained counties.—

2107 (1) Beginning in fiscal year 2008-2009, the Legislature
2108 shall appropriate moneys to offset the reductions in ad valorem
2109 tax revenue experienced by fiscally constrained counties, as
2110 defined in s. 218.67(1), which occur as a direct result of the
2111 implementation of revisions of Art. VII of the State
2112 Constitution approved in the special election held on January
2113 29, 2008. The moneys appropriated for this purpose shall be

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2114 distributed in January of each fiscal year among the fiscally
2115 constrained counties based on each county's proportion of the
2116 total reduction in ad valorem tax revenue resulting from the
2117 implementation of the revision.

2118 **Section 48. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment**
2119 **made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a**
2120 **reference thereto, subsection (1) of section 218.125, Florida**
2121 **Statutes, is reenacted to read:**

2122 218.125 Offset for tax loss associated with certain
2123 constitutional amendments affecting fiscally constrained
2124 counties.—

2125 (1) Beginning in the 2010-2011 fiscal year, the
2126 Legislature shall appropriate moneys to offset the reductions in
2127 ad valorem tax revenue experienced by fiscally constrained
2128 counties, as defined in s. 218.67(1), which occur as a direct
2129 result of the implementation of revisions of ss. 3(f) and 4(b),
2130 Art. VII of the State Constitution which were approved in the
2131 general election held in November 2008. The moneys appropriated
2132 for this purpose shall be distributed in January of each fiscal
2133 year among the fiscally constrained counties based on each
2134 county's proportion of the total reduction in ad valorem tax
2135 revenue resulting from the implementation of the revisions.

2136 **Section 49. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment**
2137 **made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a**
2138 **reference thereto, subsection (1) of section 218.135, Florida**

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2139 **Statutes, is reenacted to read:**

2140 218.135 Offset for tax loss associated with reductions in
2141 value of certain citrus fruit packing and processing equipment.-

2142 (1) For the 2018-2019 fiscal year, the Legislature shall
2143 appropriate moneys to offset the reductions in ad valorem tax
2144 revenue experienced by fiscally constrained counties, as defined
2145 in s. 218.67(1), which occur as a direct result of the
2146 implementation of s. 193.4516. The moneys appropriated for this
2147 purpose shall be distributed in January 2019 among the fiscally
2148 constrained counties based on each county's proportion of the
2149 total reduction in ad valorem tax revenue resulting from the
2150 implementation of s. 193.4516.

2151 **Section 50. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment**
2152 **made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a**
2153 **reference thereto, subsection (1) of section 218.136, Florida**
2154 **Statutes, is reenacted to read:**

2155 218.136 Offset for ad valorem revenue loss affecting
2156 fiscally constrained counties.-

2157 (1) Beginning in fiscal year 2025-2026, the Legislature
2158 shall appropriate moneys to offset the reductions in ad valorem
2159 tax revenue experienced by fiscally constrained counties, as
2160 defined in s. 218.67(1), which occur as a direct result of the
2161 implementation of revisions of s. 6(a), Art. VII of the State
2162 Constitution approved in the November 2024 general election. The
2163 moneys appropriated for this purpose shall be distributed in

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2164 January of each fiscal year among the fiscally constrained
2165 counties based on each county's proportion of the total
2166 reduction in ad valorem tax revenue resulting from the
2167 implementation of the revision of s. 6(a), Art. VII of the State
2168 Constitution.

2169 **Section 51. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment**
2170 **made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a**
2171 **reference thereto, paragraph (cc) of subsection (2) of section**
2172 **252.35, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:**

2173 252.35 Emergency management powers; Division of Emergency
2174 Management.—

2175 (2) The division is responsible for carrying out the
2176 provisions of ss. 252.31-252.90. In performing its duties, the
2177 division shall:

2178 (cc) Prioritize technical assistance and training to
2179 fiscally constrained counties as defined in s. 218.67(1) on
2180 aspects of safety measures, preparedness, prevention, response,
2181 recovery, and mitigation relating to natural disasters and
2182 emergencies.

2183 **Section 52. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment**
2184 **made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a**
2185 **reference thereto, subsection (4) of section 288.102, Florida**
2186 **Statutes, is reenacted to read:**

2187 288.102 Supply Chain Innovation Grant Program.—

2188 (4) A minimum of a one-to-one match of nonstate resources,

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2189 including local, federal, or private funds, to the state
2190 contribution is required. An award may not be made for a project
2191 that is receiving or using state funding from another state
2192 source or statutory program, including tax credits. The one-to-
2193 one match requirement is waived for a public entity located in a
2194 fiscally constrained county as defined in s. 218.67(1).

2195 **Section 53. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment**
2196 **made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a**
2197 **reference thereto, paragraph (g) of subsection (16) of section**
2198 **403.064, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:**

2199 403.064 Reuse of reclaimed water.—

2200 (16) By November 1, 2021, domestic wastewater utilities
2201 that dispose of effluent, reclaimed water, or reuse water by
2202 surface water discharge shall submit to the department for
2203 review and approval a plan for eliminating nonbeneficial surface
2204 water discharge by January 1, 2032, subject to the requirements
2205 of this section. The plan must include the average gallons per
2206 day of effluent, reclaimed water, or reuse water that will no
2207 longer be discharged into surface waters and the date of such
2208 elimination, the average gallons per day of surface water
2209 discharge which will continue in accordance with the
2210 alternatives provided for in subparagraphs (a)2. and 3., and the
2211 level of treatment that the effluent, reclaimed water, or reuse
2212 water will receive before being discharged into a surface water
2213 by each alternative.

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2214 (g) This subsection does not apply to any of the
2215 following:

2216 1. A domestic wastewater treatment facility that is
2217 located in a fiscally constrained county as described in s.
2218 218.67(1).

2219 2. A domestic wastewater treatment facility that is
2220 located in a municipality that is entirely within a rural area
2221 of opportunity as designated pursuant to s. 288.0656.

2222 3. A domestic wastewater treatment facility that is
2223 located in a municipality that has less than \$10 million in
2224 total revenue, as determined by the municipality's most recent
2225 annual financial report submitted to the Department of Financial
2226 Services in accordance with s. 218.32.

2227 4. A domestic wastewater treatment facility that is
2228 operated by an operator of a mobile home park as defined in s.
2229 723.003 and has a permitted capacity of less than 300,000
2230 gallons per day.

2231 **Section 54. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment**
2232 **made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in**
2233 **references thereto, subsections (2) and (3) of section 589.08,**
2234 **Florida Statutes, are reenacted to read:**

2235 589.08 Land acquisition restrictions.—

2236 (2) The Florida Forest Service may receive, hold the
2237 custody of, and exercise the control of any lands, and set aside
2238 into a separate, distinct and inviolable fund, any proceeds

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2239 derived from the sales of the products of such lands, the use
2240 thereof in any manner, or the sale of such lands save the 25
2241 percent of the proceeds to be paid into the State School Fund as
2242 provided by law. The Florida Forest Service may use and apply
2243 such funds for the acquisition, use, custody, management,
2244 development, or improvement of any lands vested in or subject to
2245 the control of the Florida Forest Service. After full payment
2246 has been made for the purchase of a state forest to the Federal
2247 Government or other grantor, 15 percent of the gross receipts
2248 from a state forest shall be paid to the fiscally constrained
2249 county or counties, as described in s. 218.67(1), in which it is
2250 located in proportion to the acreage located in each county for
2251 use by the county or counties for school purposes.

2252 (3) The Florida Forest Service shall pay 15 percent of the
2253 gross receipts from the Goethe State Forest to each fiscally
2254 constrained county, as described in s. 218.67(1), in which a
2255 portion of the respective forest is located in proportion to the
2256 forest acreage located in such county. The funds must be equally
2257 divided between the board of county commissioners and the school
2258 board of each fiscally constrained county.

2259 **Section 55. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment**
2260 **made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a**
2261 **reference thereto, paragraph (f) of subsection (1) of section**
2262 **1011.62, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:**

2263 1011.62 Funds for operation of schools.—If the annual

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2264 allocation from the Florida Education Finance Program to each
2265 district for operation of schools is not determined in the
2266 annual appropriations act or the substantive bill implementing
2267 the annual appropriations act, it shall be determined as
2268 follows:

2269 (1) COMPUTATION OF THE BASIC AMOUNT TO BE INCLUDED FOR
2270 OPERATION.—The following procedure shall be followed in
2271 determining the annual allocation to each district for
2272 operation:

2273 (f) *Small district factor*.—An additional value per full-
2274 time equivalent student membership is provided to each school
2275 district with a full-time equivalent student membership of fewer
2276 than 20,000 full-time equivalent students which is in a fiscally
2277 constrained county as described in s. 218.67(1). The amount of
2278 the additional value shall be specified in the General
2279 Appropriations Act.

2280 **Section 56. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment**
2281 **made by this act to sections 218.67 and 339.2818, Florida**
2282 **Statutes, in references thereto, paragraph (c) of subsection (6)**
2283 **of section 403.0741, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:**

2284 403.0741 Grease waste removal and disposal.—

2285 (6) REGULATION BY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS.—

2286 (c) Fiscally constrained counties as described in s.
2287 218.67(1) and small counties as defined in s. 339.2818(2) may
2288 opt out of the requirements of this section.

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2289 **Section 57. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment**
2290 **made by this act to section 288.0656, Florida Statutes, in a**
2291 **reference thereto, paragraph (e) of subsection (7) of section**
2292 **163.3177, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:**

2293 163.3177 Required and optional elements of comprehensive
2294 plan; studies and surveys.—

2295 (7)

2296 (e) This subsection does not confer the status of rural
2297 area of opportunity, or any of the rights or benefits derived
2298 from such status, on any land area not otherwise designated as
2299 such pursuant to s. 288.0656(7).

2300 **Section 58. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment**
2301 **made by this act to section 288.9961, Florida Statutes, in a**
2302 **reference thereto, paragraph (a) of subsection (7) of section**
2303 **288.9962, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:**

2304 288.9962 Broadband Opportunity Program.—

2305 (7) (a) In evaluating grant applications and awarding
2306 grants, the office must give priority to applications that:

2307 1. Offer broadband Internet service to important community
2308 institutions, including, but not limited to, libraries,
2309 educational institutions, public safety facilities, and health
2310 care facilities;

2311 2. Facilitate the use of telemedicine and electronic
2312 health records;

2313 3. Serve economically distressed areas of this state, as

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2314 measured by indices of unemployment, poverty, or population loss
2315 that are significantly greater than the statewide average;

2316 4. Provide for scalability to transmission speeds of at
2317 least 100 megabits per second download and 10 megabits per
2318 second upload;

2319 5. Include a component to actively promote the adoption of
2320 the newly available broadband Internet service in the community;

2321 6. Provide evidence of strong support for the project from
2322 citizens, government, businesses, and institutions in the
2323 community;

2324 7. Provide access to broadband Internet service to the
2325 greatest number of unserved households and businesses;

2326 8. Leverage greater amounts of funding for a project from
2327 private sources; or

2328 9. Demonstrate consistency with the strategic plan adopted
2329 under s. 288.9961.

2330 **Section 59. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment**
2331 **made by this act to section 339.68, Florida Statutes, in**
2332 **references thereto, subsections (5) and (6) of section 339.66,**
2333 **Florida Statutes, are reenacted to read:**

2334 339.66 Upgrade of arterial highways with controlled access
2335 facilities.—

2336 (5) Any existing applicable requirements relating to
2337 department projects shall apply to projects undertaken by the
2338 department pursuant to this section. The department shall take

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2339 into consideration the guidance and recommendations of any
2340 previous studies or reports relevant to the projects authorized
2341 by this section and ss. 339.67 and 339.68, including, but not
2342 limited to, the task force reports prepared pursuant to chapter
2343 2019-43, Laws of Florida.

2344 (6) Any existing applicable requirements relating to
2345 turnpike projects apply to projects undertaken by the Turnpike
2346 Enterprise pursuant to this section. The Turnpike Enterprise
2347 shall take into consideration the guidance and recommendations
2348 of any previous studies or reports relevant to the projects
2349 authorized by this section and ss. 339.67 and 339.68, including,
2350 but not limited to, the task force reports prepared pursuant to
2351 chapter 2019-43, Laws of Florida, and with respect to any
2352 extension of the Florida Turnpike from its northerly terminus in
2353 Wildwood.

2354 **Section 60. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment**
2355 **made by this act to section 420.9073, Florida Statutes, in**
2356 **references thereto, subsections (4) and (6) of section 420.9072,**
2357 **Florida Statutes, are reenacted to read:**

2358 420.9072 State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program.—
2359 The State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program is created for
2360 the purpose of providing funds to counties and eligible
2361 municipalities as an incentive for the creation of local housing
2362 partnerships, to expand production of and preserve affordable
2363 housing, to further the housing element of the local government

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2364 comprehensive plan specific to affordable housing, and to
2365 increase housing-related employment.

2366 (4) Moneys in the Local Government Housing Trust Fund
2367 shall be distributed by the corporation to each approved county
2368 and eligible municipality within the county as provided in s.
2369 420.9073. Distributions shall be allocated to the participating
2370 county and to each eligible municipality within the county
2371 according to an interlocal agreement between the county
2372 governing authority and the governing body of the eligible
2373 municipality or, if there is no interlocal agreement, according
2374 to population. The portion for each eligible municipality is
2375 computed by multiplying the total moneys earmarked for a county
2376 by a fraction, the numerator of which is the population of the
2377 eligible municipality and the denominator of which is the total
2378 population of the county. The remaining revenues shall be
2379 distributed to the governing body of the county.

2380 (6) The moneys that otherwise would be distributed
2381 pursuant to s. 420.9073 to a local government that does not meet
2382 the program's requirements for receipts of such distributions
2383 shall remain in the Local Government Housing Trust Fund to be
2384 administered by the corporation.

2385 **Section 61. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment**
2386 **made by this act to section 420.9073, Florida Statutes, in a**
2387 **reference thereto, paragraph (b) of subsection (7) of section**
2388 **420.9076, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:**

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2389 420.9076 Adoption of affordable housing incentive
2390 strategies; committees.—

2391 (7) The governing board of the county or the eligible
2392 municipality shall notify the corporation by certified mail of
2393 its adoption of an amendment of its local housing assistance
2394 plan to incorporate local housing incentive strategies. The
2395 notice must include a copy of the approved amended plan.

2396 (b) If a county fails to timely adopt an amended local
2397 housing assistance plan to incorporate local housing incentive
2398 strategies but an eligible municipality receiving a local
2399 housing distribution pursuant to an interlocal agreement within
2400 the county does timely adopt an amended local housing assistance
2401 plan to incorporate local housing incentive strategies, the
2402 corporation, after issuance of a notice of termination, shall
2403 thereafter distribute directly to the participating eligible
2404 municipality its share calculated in the manner provided in s.
2405 420.9073.

2406 **Section 62. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment**
2407 **made by this act to section 420.9073, Florida Statutes, in a**
2408 **reference thereto, subsection (2) of section 420.9079, Florida**
2409 **Statutes, is reenacted to read:**

2410 420.9079 Local Government Housing Trust Fund.—

2411 (2) The corporation shall administer the fund exclusively
2412 for the purpose of implementing the programs described in ss.
2413 420.907-420.9076 and this section. With the exception of

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2414 monitoring the activities of counties and eligible
2415 municipalities to determine local compliance with program
2416 requirements, the corporation shall not receive appropriations
2417 from the fund for administrative or personnel costs. For the
2418 purpose of implementing the compliance monitoring provisions of
2419 s. 420.9075(9), the corporation may request a maximum of one-
2420 quarter of 1 percent of the annual appropriation per state
2421 fiscal year. When such funding is appropriated, the corporation
2422 shall deduct the amount appropriated prior to calculating the
2423 local housing distribution pursuant to ss. 420.9072 and
2424 420.9073.

2425 **Section 63. Section 624.341, Florida Statutes, is created**
2426 **to read:**

2427 624.341 Authority of Department of Law Enforcement to
2428 accept fingerprints of, and exchange criminal history records
2429 with respect to, certain persons applying to the Office of
2430 Insurance Regulation.—

2431 (1) The Legislature finds that criminal activity of
2432 insurers poses a particular danger to the residents of this
2433 state. Floridians rely, in good faith, on the honest conduct of
2434 those who issue and manage insurance policies and other
2435 insurance instruments in this state. To safeguard this state's
2436 residents, the Legislature finds it necessary to ensure that
2437 incorporators, subscribers, officers, employees, contractors,
2438 stockholders, directors, owners, members, managers, or

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2439 volunteers involved in the organization, operation, or
2440 management of any insurer that is authorized to sell insurance
2441 do not have a criminal background.

2442 (2) The Department of Law Enforcement shall accept and
2443 process fingerprints of incorporators, subscribers, officers,
2444 employees, contractors, stockholders, directors, owners,
2445 members, managers, or volunteers involved in the organization,
2446 operation, or management of:

2447 (a) Any insurer or proposed insurer transacting or
2448 proposing to transact insurance in this state.

2449 (b) Any entity that is eligible to be examined or
2450 investigated under s. 624.316.

2451 (3) Each person required to submit fingerprints to the
2452 office must provide a full set of fingerprints to the office or
2453 to a vendor, entity, or agency authorized under s. 943.053(13).
2454 The office, vendor, entity, or agency shall forward the
2455 fingerprints to the Department of Law Enforcement for state
2456 processing, and the Department of Law Enforcement shall forward
2457 the fingerprints to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for
2458 national processing as provided in s. 624.34. Fees for state and
2459 federal fingerprint processing must be borne by the person
2460 submitting the fingerprints. The state cost for fingerprint
2461 processing is as provided in s. 943.053(3)(e).

2462 (4) The Department of Law Enforcement may, to the extent
2463 authorized by federal law, exchange any state or federal

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2464 criminal history records with the office for the purpose of
2465 issuance or continuation of a certificate of authority,
2466 certification, or license to operate in this state.

2467 (5) Fingerprints must be submitted in accordance with
2468 rules adopted by the commission.

2469 (a) Fingerprints may be submitted through a third-party
2470 vendor authorized by the Department of Law Enforcement.

2471 (b) The Department of Law Enforcement shall conduct the
2472 state criminal history background check, and a federal criminal
2473 history background check shall be conducted through the Federal
2474 Bureau of Investigation.

2475 (c) All fingerprints submitted to the Department of Law
2476 Enforcement must be submitted and entered into the statewide
2477 automated biometric identification system established in s.
2478 943.05(2)(b) and available for use in accordance with s.
2479 943.05(2)(g) and (h).

2480 (d) The costs of fingerprint processing, including the
2481 cost of retaining the fingerprints, must be borne by the person
2482 subject to the background checks.

2483 (e) The office shall review the results of the state and
2484 federal criminal history background checks and determine whether
2485 the applicant meets the requirements for the certificate of
2486 authority, certification, or license to operate in this state.

2487 (6) State criminal history records obtained through the
2488 Department of Law Enforcement, federal criminal history records

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2489 obtained through the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and local
 2490 criminal history records obtained through local law enforcement
 2491 agencies must be used by the office for the purpose of issuance,
 2492 denial, suspension, or revocation of certificates of authority,
 2493 certifications, or licenses issued to operate in this state.

2494

2495

2496

T I T L E A M E N D M E N T

2497

Remove everything before the enacting clause and insert:

2498

A bill to be entitled

2499

An act relating to community and economic development;

2500

amending s. 163.3755, F.S.; providing for the

2501

termination of community redevelopment agencies on a

2502

specified date; removing an exception; prohibiting

2503

community redevelopment agencies from initiating new

2504

projects or issuing new debt on or after a specified

2505

date unless certain requirements are met; defining the

2506

term "new project"; revising provisions relating to

2507

any outstanding bonds of a community redevelopment

2508

agency; prohibiting the creation of community

2509

redevelopment agencies on or after a specified date;

2510

prohibiting the expansion of community redevelopment

2511

areas on or after a specified date; providing

2512

applicability; authorizing existing agencies before a

2513

specified date to continue to operate; reenacting and

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2514 amending s. 20.60, F.S.; revising the list of
2515 divisions and offices within the Department of
2516 Commerce to conform to changes made by the act;
2517 revising the annual program reports that must be
2518 included in the annual report of the Department of
2519 Commerce; amending s. 163.3168, F.S.; requiring the
2520 state land planning agency to give preference for
2521 technical assistance funding to local governments
2522 located in a rural area of opportunity; requiring the
2523 agency to consult with the Office of Rural Prosperity
2524 when awarding certain funding; amending s. 215.971,
2525 F.S.; providing construction regarding agreements
2526 funded with federal or state assistance; requiring the
2527 agency to expedite payment requests from a county,
2528 municipality, or rural area of opportunity for a
2529 specified purpose; requiring each state agency to
2530 report to the Office of Rural Prosperity by a certain
2531 date with a summary of certain information; requiring
2532 the office to summarize the information it receives
2533 for its annual report; amending s. 218.67, F.S.;
2534 revising the conditions required for a county to be
2535 considered a fiscally constrained county; authorizing
2536 eligible counties to receive a distribution of sales
2537 and use tax revenue; revising the sources that the
2538 Department of Revenue must use to determine the amount

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2539 distributed to fiscally constrained counties; revising
2540 the factors for allocation of the distribution of
2541 revenue to fiscally constrained counties; requiring
2542 that the computation and amount distributed be
2543 calculated based on a specified rounding algorithm;
2544 authorizing specified uses for the revenue; conforming
2545 a cross-reference; amending s. 288.0001, F.S.;
2546 requiring the Office of Economic and Demographic
2547 Research and the Office of Program Policy Analysis and
2548 Government Accountability (OPPAGA) to prepare a report
2549 for a specified purpose; specifying requirements for
2550 the report; providing that the Office of Economic and
2551 Demographic Research and OPPAGA must be provided with
2552 all data necessary to complete the rural communities
2553 or areas report upon request; authorizing the Office
2554 of Economic and Demographic Research and OPPAGA to
2555 collaborate on all data collection and analysis;
2556 requiring the Office of Economic and Demographic
2557 Research and OPPAGA to submit the report to the
2558 Legislature by a specified date; providing additional
2559 requirements for the report; providing for expiration;
2560 amending s. 288.001, F.S.; requiring the Florida Small
2561 Business Development Center Network to use certain
2562 funds appropriated for a specified purpose;
2563 authorizing the network to dedicate funds to

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2564 facilitate certain events; amending s. 288.007, F.S.;

2565 revising which local governments and economic

2566 development organizations seeking to recruit

2567 businesses are required to submit a specified report;

2568 creating s. 288.013, F.S.; providing legislative

2569 findings; creating the Office of Rural Prosperity

2570 within the Department of Commerce; requiring the

2571 Governor to appoint a director, subject to

2572 confirmation by the Senate; providing that the

2573 director reports to and serves at the pleasure of the

2574 secretary of the department; providing the duties of

2575 the office; requiring the office to establish by a

2576 specified date a certain number of regional rural

2577 community liaison centers across this state for a

2578 specified purpose; providing the powers, duties, and

2579 functions of the liaison centers; requiring the

2580 liaison centers, to the extent possible, to coordinate

2581 with certain entities; requiring the liaison centers

2582 to engage with the Rural Economic Development

2583 Initiative (REDI); requiring at least one staff member

2584 of a liaison center to attend the monthly meetings in

2585 person or by means of electronic communication;

2586 requiring the director of the office to submit an

2587 annual report to the Administration Commission in the

2588 Executive Office of the Governor; specifying

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Amendment No.

2589 requirements for the annual report; requiring that the
2590 annual report also be submitted to the Legislature by
2591 a specified date and published on the office's
2592 website; requiring the director of the office to
2593 attend the next Administration Commission meeting to
2594 present detailed information from the annual report;
2595 requiring OPPAGA to review the effectiveness of the
2596 office by a certain date annually until a specified
2597 date; requiring OPPAGA to review the office at
2598 specified intervals; requiring such reviews to include
2599 certain information to be considered by the
2600 Legislature; requiring that such reports be submitted
2601 to the Legislature; requiring OPPAGA to review certain
2602 strategies from other states; requiring OPPAGA to
2603 submit to the Legislature its findings at certain
2604 intervals; creating s. 288.014, F.S.; providing
2605 legislative findings; requiring the Office of Rural
2606 Prosperity to administer the Renaissance Grants
2607 Program to provide block grants to eligible
2608 communities; requiring the Office of Economic and
2609 Demographic Research to certify to the Office of Rural
2610 Prosperity certain information by a specified date;
2611 defining the term "growth-impeded"; requiring the
2612 Office of Economic and Demographic Research to certify
2613 annually that a county remains growth-impeded until

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2614 such county has positive population growth for a
2615 specified amount of time; providing that such county,
2616 after 3 consecutive years of population growth, is
2617 eligible to participate in the program for 1
2618 additional year; requiring a county eligible for the
2619 program to enter into an agreement with the Office of
2620 Rural Prosperity in order to receive the block grant;
2621 giving such counties broad authority to design their
2622 specific plans; prohibiting the Office of Rural
2623 Prosperity from determining how such counties
2624 implement the block grant; requiring regional rural
2625 community liaison center staff to provide assistance,
2626 upon request; requiring participating counties to
2627 report annually to the Office of Rural Prosperity with
2628 certain information; providing that a participating
2629 county receives a specified amount from funds
2630 appropriated to the program; requiring participating
2631 counties to make all attempts to limit the amount
2632 spent on administrative costs; authorizing
2633 participating counties to contribute other funds for
2634 block grant purposes; requiring participating counties
2635 to hire a renaissance coordinator; providing that
2636 funds from the block grant may be used to hire the
2637 renaissance coordinator; providing the
2638 responsibilities of the renaissance coordinator;

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2639 requiring the regional rural community liaison center
2640 staff to provide assistance and training to the
2641 renaissance coordinator, upon request; requiring
2642 participating counties to design a plan to make
2643 targeted investments to achieve population growth and
2644 increase economic vitality; providing requirements for
2645 such plans; requiring participating counties to
2646 develop intergovernmental agreements with certain
2647 entities in order to implement the plan; requiring the
2648 Auditor General to conduct an operational audit every
2649 2 years for a specified purpose; requiring the Office
2650 of Economic and Demographic Research to provide an
2651 annual report on a specified date of renaissance block
2652 grant recipients by county; providing requirements for
2653 the annual report; requiring that the report be
2654 submitted to the Legislature; prohibiting funds
2655 appropriated for the program from being subject to
2656 reversion; providing for an expiration of the section;
2657 creating s. 288.0175, F.S.; creating the Public
2658 Infrastructure Smart Technology Grant Program within
2659 the Office of Rural Prosperity; defining terms;
2660 requiring the office to contract with one or more
2661 smart technology lead organizations to administer a
2662 grant program for a specified purpose; providing the
2663 criteria for such contracts; requiring that projects

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Amendment No.

2664 funded by the grant program be included in the
2665 office's annual report; amending s. 288.018, F.S.;
2666 requiring the office, rather than the Department of
2667 Commerce, to establish a grant program to provide
2668 funding for regional economic development
2669 organizations; revising who may apply for such grants;
2670 providing that a grant award may not exceed a certain
2671 amount in a year; providing exceptions to a provision
2672 that the department may expend a certain amount for a
2673 certain purpose; amending s. 288.019, F.S.; revising
2674 the program criteria and procedures that agencies and
2675 organizations of REDI are required to review; revising
2676 the list of impacts each REDI agency and organization
2677 must consider in its review; requiring REDI agencies
2678 and organizations to develop a proposal for
2679 modifications which minimizes the financial and
2680 resource impacts to a rural community; requiring that
2681 ranking of evaluation criteria and scoring procedures
2682 be used only when ranking is a component of the
2683 program; requiring that match requirements be waived
2684 or reduced for rural communities; providing that
2685 donations of land may be treated as in-kind matches;
2686 requiring each agency and organization that applies
2687 for or receives federal funding to request federal
2688 approval to waive or reduce the financial match

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Amendment No.

2689 requirements, if any, for projects in rural
2690 communities; requiring that proposals be submitted to
2691 the office, rather than the department; requiring each
2692 REDI agency and organization to modify rules or
2693 policies as necessary to reflect the finalized
2694 proposal; requiring that information about authorized
2695 waivers be included on the office's online rural
2696 resource directory; conforming a cross-reference;
2697 amending s. 288.021, F.S.; requiring, when
2698 practicable, the economic development liaison to serve
2699 as the agency representative for REDI; amending s.
2700 288.065, F.S.; defining the term "unit of local
2701 government"; requiring the office to include in its
2702 annual report certain information about the Rural
2703 Community Development Revolving Loan Fund; conforming
2704 provisions to changes made by the act; amending s.
2705 288.0655, F.S.; revising the list of grants that may
2706 be awarded by the office; deleting the authorization
2707 for local match requirements to be waived for a
2708 catalyst site; revising the list of departments the
2709 office must consult with to certify applicants;
2710 requiring the office to include certain information
2711 about the Rural Infrastructure Trust Fund in its
2712 annual report; conforming provisions to changes made
2713 by the act; amending s. 288.0656, F.S.; providing

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2714 legislative findings; providing that REDI is created
2715 within the Office of Rural Prosperity, rather than the
2716 department; deleting the definitions of the terms
2717 "catalyst project" and "catalyst site"; requiring that
2718 an alternate for each designated deputy secretary be a
2719 deputy secretary or higher-level staff person;
2720 requiring that the names of such alternates be
2721 reported to the director of the office; requiring at
2722 least one rural liaison to participate in REDI
2723 meetings; requiring REDI to meet at least each month;
2724 deleting a provision that a rural area of opportunity
2725 may designate catalyst projects; requiring REDI to
2726 submit a certain report to the office, rather than to
2727 the department; specifying requirements for such
2728 report; conforming provisions to changes made by the
2729 act; repealing s. 288.06561, F.S., relating to
2730 reduction or waiver of financial match requirements;
2731 amending s. 288.0657, F.S.; requiring the office,
2732 rather than the department, to provide grants to
2733 assist rural communities; providing that such grants
2734 may be used for specified purposes; requiring the
2735 rural liaison to assist those applying for such
2736 grants; providing that marketing grants may include
2737 certain funding; amending s. 288.1226, F.S.; revising
2738 required components of the 4-year marketing plan of

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2739 the Florida Tourism Industry Marketing Corporation;
2740 repealing s. 288.12266, F.S., relating to the Targeted
2741 Marketing Assistance Program; amending s. 288.9961,
2742 F.S.; revising the definition of the term
2743 "underserved"; requiring the office to consult with
2744 regional rural community liaison centers on
2745 development of a certain strategic plan; requiring
2746 rural liaisons to assist rural communities with
2747 providing feedback in applying for federal grants for
2748 broadband Internet services; requiring the office to
2749 submit reports with specified information to the
2750 Governor and the Legislature within certain
2751 timeframes; repealing s. 290.06561, F.S., relating to
2752 designation of rural enterprise zones as catalyst
2753 sites; amending s. 334.044, F.S.; revising the powers
2754 and duties of the Department of Transportation;
2755 amending s. 339.0801, F.S.; revising the allocation of
2756 funds received in the State Transportation Trust Fund;
2757 amending s. 339.2816, F.S.; requiring, rather than
2758 authorizing, that certain funds received from the
2759 State Transportation Trust Fund be used for the Small
2760 County Road Assistance Program; requiring the
2761 department to use other additional revenues for the
2762 Small County Road Assistance Program; providing an
2763 exception from the prohibition against funding

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2764 capacity improvements on county roads; amending s.
2765 339.2817, F.S.; revising the criteria that the
2766 Department of Transportation must consider for
2767 evaluating projects for County Incentive Grant Program
2768 assistance; requiring the department to give priority
2769 to counties located either wholly or partially within
2770 the Everglades Agricultural Area and which request a
2771 specified percentage of project costs for eligible
2772 projects; specifying a limitation on such requests;
2773 providing for future expiration; amending s. 339.2818,
2774 F.S.; deleting a provision that the funds allocated
2775 under the Small County Outreach Program are in
2776 addition to the Small County Road Assistance Program;
2777 deleting a provision that a local government within
2778 the Everglades Agricultural Area, the Peace River
2779 Basin, or the Suwannee River Basin may compete for
2780 additional funding; conforming provisions to changes
2781 made by the act; making a technical change; amending
2782 s. 339.68, F.S.; providing legislative findings;
2783 creating the Florida Arterial Road Modernization
2784 Program within the Department of Commerce; defining
2785 the term "rural community"; requiring the department
2786 to allocate from the State Transportation Trust Fund a
2787 minimum sum in each fiscal year to fund the program;
2788 providing that such funding is in addition to any

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Amendment No.

2789 other funding provided to the program; providing
2790 criteria the department must use to prioritize
2791 projects for funding under the program; requiring the
2792 department to submit a report to the Governor and the
2793 Legislature by a specified date; requiring that such
2794 report be submitted every 2 years thereafter;
2795 providing the criteria for such report; requiring the
2796 Department of Transportation to allocate additional
2797 funds to implement the Small County Road Assistance
2798 Program and amend the tentative work program for a
2799 specified number of fiscal years; requiring the
2800 department to submit a budget amendment before the
2801 adoption of the work program; requiring the department
2802 to allocate sufficient funds to implement the Florida
2803 Arterial Road Modernization Program; requiring the
2804 department to amend the current tentative work program
2805 for a specified number of fiscal years to include the
2806 program's projects; requiring the department to submit
2807 a budget amendment before the implementation of the
2808 program; requiring that the revenue increases in the
2809 State Transportation Trust Fund which are derived from
2810 the act be used to fund the work program; amending s.
2811 420.9073, F.S.; revising the calculation of guaranteed
2812 amounts distributed from the Local Government Housing
2813 Trust Fund; reenacting and amending s. 420.9075, F.S.;

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Amendment No.

2814 authorizing a certain percentage of the funds made
2815 available in each county and eligible municipality
2816 from the local housing distribution to be used to
2817 preserve multifamily affordable rental housing;
2818 specifying what such funds may be used for; providing
2819 an expiration; amending ss. 163.3187, 212.205,
2820 257.191, 257.193, 265.283, 288.11621, 288.11631,
2821 443.191, 571.26, and 571.265, F.S.; conforming cross-
2822 references and provisions to changes made by the act;
2823 reenacting s. 288.9935(8), F.S., relating to the
2824 Microfinance Guarantee Program, to incorporate the
2825 amendment made to s. 20.60, F.S., in a reference
2826 thereto; reenacting ss. 125.0104(5)(c), 193.624(3),
2827 196.182(2), 218.12(1), 218.125(1), 218.135(1),
2828 218.136(1), 252.35(2)(cc), 288.102(4), 403.064(16)(g),
2829 589.08(2) and (3), and 1011.62(1)(f), F.S., relating
2830 to authorized uses of tourist development tax;
2831 applicability of assessments of renewable energy
2832 source devices; application of exemptions of renewable
2833 energy source devices; appropriations to offset
2834 reductions in ad valorem tax revenue in fiscally
2835 constrained counties; offset for tax loss associated
2836 with certain constitutional amendments affecting
2837 fiscally constrained counties; offset for tax loss
2838 associated with reductions in value of certain citrus

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Amendment No.

2839 fruit packing and processing equipment; offset for ad
2840 valorem revenue loss affecting fiscally constrained
2841 counties; Division of Emergency Management powers;
2842 one-to-one match requirement under the Supply Chain
2843 Innovation Grant Program; applicability of provisions
2844 related to reuse of reclaimed water; land acquisition
2845 restrictions; and funds for operation of schools,
2846 respectively, to incorporate the amendment made to s.
2847 218.67, F.S., in references thereto; reenacting s.
2848 403.0741(6)(c), F.S., relating to grease waste removal
2849 and disposal, to incorporate the amendments made to
2850 ss. 218.67 and 339.2818, F.S., in references thereto;
2851 reenacting s. 163.3177(7)(e), F.S., relating to
2852 required and optional elements of comprehensive plans
2853 and studies and surveys, to incorporate the amendment
2854 made to s. 288.0656, F.S., in a reference thereto;
2855 reenacting s. 288.9962(7)(a), F.S., relating to the
2856 Broadband Opportunity Program, to incorporate the
2857 amendment made to s. 288.9961, F.S., in a reference
2858 thereto; reenacting s. 339.66(5) and (6), F.S.,
2859 relating to upgrades of arterial highways with
2860 controlled access facilities, to incorporate the
2861 amendment made to s. 339.68, F.S., in references
2862 thereto; reenacting ss. 420.9072(4) and (6),
2863 420.9076(7)(b), and 420.9079(2), F.S., relating to the

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Amendment No.

2864 State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program,
2865 adoption of affordable housing incentive strategies
2866 and committees, and the Local Government Housing Trust
2867 Fund, respectively, to incorporate the amendment made
2868 to s. 420.9073, F.S., in references thereto; amending
2869 s. 624.341, F.S.; providing legislative findings;
2870 requiring the Department of Law Enforcement to accept
2871 and process certain fingerprints; specifying
2872 procedures for submitting and processing
2873 fingerprinting; providing fees for fingerprinting;
2874 authorizing the department to exchange certain records
2875 with the Office of Insurance Regulation for certain
2876 purposes; specifying that fingerprints must be
2877 submitted in accordance with certain rules;
2878 authorizing fingerprints to be submitted through a
2879 third-party vendor authorized by the department;
2880 requiring the department to conduct certain background
2881 checks; requiring certain background checks to be
2882 conducted through the Federal Bureau of Investigation;
2883 requiring that fingerprints be submitted and entered
2884 into a specified system; specifying who bears the
2885 costs of fingerprint processing; requiring the office
2886 to review certain background checks results and to
2887 make certain determination; requiring that certain

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Amendment No.

2888 | criminal history records be used by the office for
2889 | certain purposes; providing effective dates.

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