



689718

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate	.	House
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Floor: 1/R/RM	.	Floor: RC
05/02/2025 01:08 PM	.	05/01/2025 02:21 PM
	.	

Senators Simon and Collins moved the following:

1 **Senate Amendment to House Amendment (746171) (with title**
2 **amendment)**

3
4 Delete lines 5 - 24

5 and insert:

6 Section 1. Paragraph (a) of subsection (3) and paragraph
7 (c) of subsection (10) of section 20.60, Florida Statutes, are
8 amended, and paragraph (a) of subsection (5) of that section is
9 reenacted, to read:

10 20.60 Department of Commerce; creation; powers and duties.-

11 (3)(a) The following divisions and offices of the



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12 Department of Commerce are established:

- 13 1. The Division of Economic Development.
- 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
39 responsibilities to achieve the duties, responsibilities, and
40 goals of the department. Specifically:



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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.
64 4. Develop a 5-year statewide strategic plan. The strategic
65 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



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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-term
82 economic development of the state with increased emphasis in
83 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
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.



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

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



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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 2. Subsection (5) is added to section 163.3168,
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 3. Paragraph (i) is added to subsection (4) of
148 section 201.15, Florida Statutes, to read:

149 201.15 Distribution of taxes collected.—All taxes collected
150 under this chapter are hereby pledged and shall be first made
151 available to make payments when due on bonds issued pursuant to
152 s. 215.618 or s. 215.619, or any other bonds authorized to be
153 issued on a parity basis with such bonds. Such pledge and
154 availability for the payment of these bonds shall have priority
155 over any requirement for the costs of collection and enforcement
156 under this section. Before distribution pursuant to this



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157 section, the Department of Revenue shall deduct amounts
158 necessary to pay the costs of the collection and enforcement of
159 the tax levied by this chapter. The costs may not be levied
160 against any portion of taxes pledged to debt service on bonds to
161 the extent that the costs are required to pay any amounts
162 relating to the bonds. All of the costs of the collection and
163 enforcement of the tax levied by this chapter shall be available
164 and transferred to the extent necessary to pay debt service and
165 any other amounts payable with respect to bonds authorized
166 before January 1, 2017, secured by revenues distributed pursuant
167 to this section. All taxes remaining after deduction of costs
168 shall be distributed as follows:

169 (4) After the required distributions to the Land
170 Acquisition Trust Fund pursuant to subsections (1) and (2), the
171 lesser of 8 percent of the remainder or \$150 million in each
172 fiscal year shall be paid into the State Treasury to the credit
173 of the State Housing Trust Fund and shall be expended pursuant
174 to s. 420.50871. If 8 percent of the remainder is greater than
175 \$150 million in any fiscal year, the difference between 8
176 percent of the remainder and \$150 million shall be paid into the
177 State Treasury to the credit of the General Revenue Fund. The
178 remainder shall be distributed as follows:

179 (i) A total of \$30 million shall be paid to the credit of
180 the State Transportation Trust Fund, which funds are exclusively
181 for the use of the Florida Arterial Road Modernization Program
182 as provided in s. 339.68.

183 Section 4. Paragraph (c) of subsection (2) of section
184 202.18, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

185 202.18 Allocation and disposition of tax proceeds.—The



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186 proceeds of the communications services taxes remitted under
187 this chapter shall be treated as follows:

188 (2) The proceeds of the taxes remitted under s.
189 202.12(1)(b) shall be allocated as follows:

190 (c)1. After the distribution required under paragraph (b),
191 the remainder ~~During each calendar year, the remaining portion~~
192 ~~of the proceeds~~ shall be transferred to the Local Government
193 Half-cent Sales Tax Clearing Trust Fund. ~~Seventy percent of such~~
194 ~~proceeds shall be~~ and allocated in the same proportion as the
195 allocation of total receipts of the half-cent sales tax under s.
196 218.61 and the emergency distribution under s. 218.65 in the
197 prior state fiscal year. ~~Thirty percent of such proceeds shall~~
198 ~~be distributed pursuant to s. 218.67.~~

199 2. The proportion of the proceeds allocated based on the
200 emergency distribution under s. 218.65 shall be distributed
201 pursuant to s. 218.65.

202 3. In each calendar year, the proportion of the proceeds
203 allocated based on the half-cent sales tax under s. 218.61 shall
204 be allocated to each county in the same proportion as the
205 county's percentage of total sales tax allocation for the prior
206 state fiscal year and distributed pursuant to s. 218.62.

207 4. The department shall distribute the appropriate amount
208 to each municipality and county each month at the same time that
209 local communications services taxes are distributed pursuant to
210 subsection (3).

211 Section 5. Paragraph (d) of subsection (6) of section
212 212.20, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

213 212.20 Funds collected, disposition; additional powers of
214 department; operational expense; refund of taxes adjudicated



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215 unconstitutionally collected.—

216 (6) Distribution of all proceeds under this chapter and ss.
217 202.18(1)(b) and (2)(b) and 203.01(1)(a)3. is as follows:

218 (d) The proceeds of all other taxes and fees imposed
219 pursuant to this chapter or remitted pursuant to s. 202.18(1)(b)
220 and (2)(b) shall be distributed as follows:

221 1. In any fiscal year, the greater of \$500 million, minus
222 an amount equal to 4.6 percent of the proceeds of the taxes
223 collected pursuant to chapter 201, or 5.2 percent of all other
224 taxes and fees imposed pursuant to this chapter or remitted
225 pursuant to s. 202.18(1)(b) and (2)(b) shall be deposited in
226 monthly installments into the General Revenue Fund.

227 2. After the distribution under subparagraph 1., 8.9744
228 percent of the amount remitted by a sales tax dealer located
229 within a participating county pursuant to s. 218.61 shall be
230 transferred into the Local Government Half-cent Sales Tax
231 Clearing Trust Fund. Beginning July 1, 2003, the amount to be
232 transferred shall be reduced by 0.1 percent, and the department
233 shall distribute this amount to the Public Employees Relations
234 Commission Trust Fund less \$5,000 each month, which shall be
235 added to the amount calculated in subparagraph 3. and
236 distributed accordingly.

237 3. After the distribution under subparagraphs 1. and 2.,
238 0.0966 percent shall be transferred to the Local Government
239 Half-cent Sales Tax Clearing Trust Fund and distributed pursuant
240 to s. 218.65.

241 4. After the distributions under subparagraphs 1., 2., and
242 3., 2.0810 percent of the available proceeds shall be
243 transferred monthly to the Revenue Sharing Trust Fund for



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244 Counties pursuant to s. 218.215.

245 5. After the distributions under subparagraphs 1., 2., and
246 3., 1.3653 percent of the available proceeds shall be
247 transferred monthly to the Revenue Sharing Trust Fund for
248 Municipalities pursuant to s. 218.215. If the total revenue to
249 be distributed pursuant to this subparagraph is at least as
250 great as the amount due from the Revenue Sharing Trust Fund for
251 Municipalities and the former Municipal Financial Assistance
252 Trust Fund in state fiscal year 1999-2000, no municipality shall
253 receive less than the amount due from the Revenue Sharing Trust
254 Fund for Municipalities and the former Municipal Financial
255 Assistance Trust Fund in state fiscal year 1999-2000. If the
256 total proceeds to be distributed are less than the amount
257 received in combination from the Revenue Sharing Trust Fund for
258 Municipalities and the former Municipal Financial Assistance
259 Trust Fund in state fiscal year 1999-2000, each municipality
260 shall receive an amount proportionate to the amount it was due
261 in state fiscal year 1999-2000.

262 6. After the distributions required under subparagraphs 1.-
263 5., the greater of \$50 million or 0.1438 percent of the
264 available proceeds shall be transferred in each fiscal year to
265 fiscally constrained counties pursuant to s. 218.67.

266 7. Of the remaining proceeds:

267 a. In each fiscal year, the sum of \$29,915,500 shall be
268 divided into as many equal parts as there are counties in the
269 state, and one part shall be distributed to each county. The
270 distribution among the several counties must begin each fiscal
271 year on or before January 5th and continue monthly for a total
272 of 4 months. If a local or special law required that any moneys



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273 accruing to a county in fiscal year 1999-2000 under the then-
274 existing provisions of s. 550.135 be paid directly to the
275 district school board, special district, or a municipal
276 government, such payment must continue until the local or
277 special law is amended or repealed. The state covenants with
278 holders of bonds or other instruments of indebtedness issued by
279 local governments, special districts, or district school boards
280 before July 1, 2000, that it is not the intent of this
281 subparagraph to adversely affect the rights of those holders or
282 relieve local governments, special districts, or district school
283 boards of the duty to meet their obligations as a result of
284 previous pledges or assignments or trusts entered into which
285 obligated funds received from the distribution to county
286 governments under then-existing s. 550.135. This distribution
287 specifically is in lieu of funds distributed under s. 550.135
288 before July 1, 2000.

289 b. The department shall distribute \$166,667 monthly to each
290 applicant certified as a facility for a new or retained
291 professional sports franchise pursuant to s. 288.1162. Up to
292 \$41,667 shall be distributed monthly by the department to each
293 certified applicant as defined in s. 288.11621 for a facility
294 for a spring training franchise. However, not more than \$416,670
295 may be distributed monthly in the aggregate to all certified
296 applicants for facilities for spring training franchises.
297 Distributions begin 60 days after such certification and
298 continue for not more than 30 years, except as otherwise
299 provided in s. 288.11621. A certified applicant identified in
300 this sub-subparagraph may not receive more in distributions than
301 expended by the applicant for the public purposes provided in s.



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302 288.1162(5) or s. 288.11621(3).

303 c. The department shall distribute up to \$83,333 monthly to
304 each certified applicant as defined in s. 288.11631 for a
305 facility used by a single spring training franchise, or up to
306 \$166,667 monthly to each certified applicant as defined in s.
307 288.11631 for a facility used by more than one spring training
308 franchise. Monthly distributions begin 60 days after such
309 certification or July 1, 2016, whichever is later, and continue
310 for not more than 20 years to each certified applicant as
311 defined in s. 288.11631 for a facility used by a single spring
312 training franchise or not more than 25 years to each certified
313 applicant as defined in s. 288.11631 for a facility used by more
314 than one spring training franchise. A certified applicant
315 identified in this sub-subparagraph may not receive more in
316 distributions than expended by the applicant for the public
317 purposes provided in s. 288.11631(3).

318 d. The department shall distribute \$15,333 monthly to the
319 State Transportation Trust Fund.

320 e.(I) On or before July 25, 2021, August 25, 2021, and
321 September 25, 2021, the department shall distribute \$324,533,334
322 in each of those months to the Unemployment Compensation Trust
323 Fund, less an adjustment for refunds issued from the General
324 Revenue Fund pursuant to s. 443.131(3)(e)3. before making the
325 distribution. The adjustments made by the department to the
326 total distributions shall be equal to the total refunds made
327 pursuant to s. 443.131(3)(e)3. If the amount of refunds to be
328 subtracted from any single distribution exceeds the
329 distribution, the department may not make that distribution and
330 must subtract the remaining balance from the next distribution.



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331 (II) Beginning July 2022, and on or before the 25th day of
332 each month, the department shall distribute \$90 million monthly
333 to the Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund.

334 (III) If the ending balance of the Unemployment
335 Compensation Trust Fund exceeds \$4,071,519,600 on the last day
336 of any month, as determined from United States Department of the
337 Treasury data, the Office of Economic and Demographic Research
338 shall certify to the department that the ending balance of the
339 trust fund exceeds such amount.

340 (IV) This sub-subparagraph is repealed, and the department
341 shall end monthly distributions under sub-sub-subparagraph (II),
342 on the date the department receives certification under sub-sub-
343 subparagraph (III).

344 f. Beginning July 1, 2023, in each fiscal year, the
345 department shall distribute \$27.5 million to the Florida
346 Agricultural Promotional Campaign Trust Fund under s. 571.26,
347 for further distribution in accordance with s. 571.265.

348 ~~8.7.~~ All other proceeds must remain in the General Revenue
349 Fund.

350 Section 6. Paragraph (h) of subsection (1) of section
351 215.971, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

352 215.971 Agreements funded with federal or state
353 assistance.—

354 (1) An agency agreement that provides state financial
355 assistance to a recipient or subrecipient, as those terms are
356 defined in s. 215.97, or that provides federal financial
357 assistance to a subrecipient, as defined by applicable United
358 States Office of Management and Budget circulars, must include
359 all of the following:



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360 (h)1. If the agency agreement provides federal or state
361 financial assistance to a county or municipality that is a rural
362 community or rural area of opportunity as those terms are
363 defined in s. 288.0656(2), a provision allowing the agency to
364 provide for the payment of invoices to the county, municipality,
365 or rural area of opportunity as that term is defined in s.
366 288.0656(2), for verified and eligible performance that has been
367 completed in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth
368 in the agreement. This provision is not intended to require
369 reimbursement to the county, municipality, or rural area of
370 opportunity for invoices paid, but to allow the agency to
371 provide for the payment of invoices due. The agency shall
372 expedite such payment requests in order to facilitate the timely
373 payment of invoices received by the county, municipality, or
374 rural area of opportunity. This provision is included to
375 alleviate the financial hardships that certain rural counties
376 and municipalities encounter when administering agreements, and
377 must be exercised by the agency when a county or municipality
378 demonstrates financial hardship, to the extent that federal or
379 state law, rule, or other regulation allows such payments. This
380 paragraph may not be construed to alter or limit any other
381 provisions of federal or state law, rule, or other regulation.

382 2. By August 1, 2026, and each year thereafter, each state
383 agency shall report to the Office of Rural Prosperity
384 summarizing the implementation of this paragraph for the
385 preceding fiscal year. The Office of Rural Prosperity shall
386 summarize the information received pursuant to this paragraph in
387 its annual report as required in s. 288.013.

388 Section 7. Section 218.67, Florida Statutes, is amended to



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389 read:

390 218.67 Distribution for fiscally constrained counties.—

391 (1) Each county ~~that is entirely within a rural area of~~
392 ~~opportunity as designated by the Governor pursuant to s.~~
393 ~~288.0656 or each county~~ for which the value of a mill will raise
394 no more than \$10 ~~\$5~~ million in revenue, based on the taxable
395 value certified pursuant to s. 1011.62(4)(a)1.a., from the
396 previous July 1, shall be considered a fiscally constrained
397 county.

398 (2) Each fiscally constrained county government that
399 participates in the local government half-cent sales tax shall
400 be eligible to receive an additional distribution ~~from the Local~~
401 ~~Government Half-cent Sales Tax Clearing Trust Fund,~~ as provided
402 in s. 212.20(6)(d)6. ~~s. 202.18(2)(e)1.~~, in addition to its
403 regular monthly distribution provided under this part and any
404 emergency or supplemental distribution under s. 218.65.

405 (3) The amount to be distributed to each fiscally
406 constrained county shall be determined by the Department of
407 Revenue at the beginning of the fiscal year, using the prior
408 fiscal year's sales and use tax collections from the most recent
409 fiscal year that reports 12 months of collections ~~July 1 taxable~~
410 ~~value certified pursuant to s. 1011.62(4)(a)1.a., tax data,~~
411 population as defined in s. 218.21, and the most current
412 calendar year per capita personal income published by the Bureau
413 of Economic Analysis of the United States Department of Commerce
414 ~~millage rate levied for the prior fiscal year.~~ The amount
415 distributed shall be allocated based upon the following factors:

416 (a) The contribution-to-revenue ~~relative revenue-raising-~~
417 ~~capacity~~ factor for each participating county shall equal 100



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418 multiplied by a quotient, the numerator of which is the county's
419 population and the denominator of which is the state sales and
420 use tax collections attributable to the county ~~be the ability of~~
421 ~~the eligible county to generate ad valorem revenues from 1 mill~~
422 ~~of taxation on a per capita basis. A county that raises no more~~
423 ~~than \$25 per capita from 1 mill shall be assigned a value of 1;~~
424 ~~a county that raises more than \$25 but no more than \$30 per~~
425 ~~capita from 1 mill shall be assigned a value of 0.75; and a~~
426 ~~county that raises more than \$30 but no more than \$50 per capita~~
427 ~~from 1 mill shall be assigned a value of 0.5. No value shall be~~
428 ~~assigned to counties that raise more than \$50 per capita from 1~~
429 ~~mill of ad valorem taxation.~~

430 (b) The personal-income local effort factor shall equal a
431 quotient, the numerator of which is the median per capita
432 personal income of participating counties and the denominator of
433 which is the county's per capita personal income ~~be a measure of~~
434 ~~the relative level of local effort of the eligible county as~~
435 ~~indicated by the millage rate levied for the prior fiscal year.~~
436 ~~The local effort factor shall be the most recently adopted~~
437 ~~countywide operating millage rate for each eligible county~~
438 ~~multiplied by 0.1.~~

439 (c) Each eligible county's proportional allocation of the
440 total amount available to be distributed to all of the eligible
441 counties shall be in the same proportion as the sum of the
442 county's two factors is to the sum of the two factors for all
443 eligible counties. The proportional rate computation must be
444 carried to the fifth decimal place, and the amount to distribute
445 to each county must be rounded to the next whole dollar amount.
446 The counties that are eligible to receive an allocation under



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447 this subsection and the amount available to be distributed to
448 such counties do ~~shall~~ not include counties participating in the
449 phaseout period under subsection (4) or the amounts they remain
450 eligible to receive during the phaseout.

451 (4) For those counties that no longer qualify under the
452 requirements of subsection (1) after the effective date of this
453 act, there shall be a 2-year phaseout period. Beginning on July
454 1 of the year following the year in which the value of a mill
455 for that county exceeds \$10 ~~\$5~~ million in revenue, the county
456 shall receive two-thirds of the amount received in the prior
457 year, and beginning on July 1 of the second year following the
458 year in which the value of a mill for that county exceeds \$10 ~~\$5~~
459 million in revenue, the county shall receive one-third of the
460 amount received in the last year that the county qualified as a
461 fiscally constrained county. Following the 2-year phaseout
462 period, the county is ~~shall~~ no longer ~~be~~ eligible to receive any
463 distributions under this section unless the county can be
464 considered a fiscally constrained county as provided in
465 subsection (1).

466 (5) (a) The revenues received under this section must be
467 allocated ~~may be used~~ by a county to be used for the following
468 purposes:

469 1. Fifty percent for public safety, including salary
470 expenditures for law enforcement officers or correctional
471 officers, as those terms are defined in s. 943.10(1) and (2),
472 respectively, firefighters as defined in s. 633.102, or
473 emergency medical technicians or paramedics as those terms are
474 defined in s. 401.23.

475 2. Thirty percent for infrastructure needs.



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476 3. Twenty percent for any public purpose.

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

481 Section 8. Subsection (6) is added to section 288.0001,
482 Florida Statutes, to read:

483 288.0001 Economic Development Programs Evaluation.—The
484 Office of Economic and Demographic Research and the Office of
485 Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA)
486 shall develop and present to the Governor, the President of the
487 Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the
488 chairs of the legislative appropriations committees the Economic
489 Development Programs Evaluation.

490 (6) (a) The Office of Economic and Demographic Research and
491 OPPAGA shall prepare a report on the impact of the Florida
492 Statutes on rural communities. Specifically, the report must
493 include the following:

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

500 a. Evaluation of whether current provisions properly
501 distinguish these communities or areas from more urban and
502 suburban parts of this state;

503 b. Consideration of updates to the definitions and
504 references to classify additional rural areas, such as growing



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505 communities, unincorporated areas, or rural communities by
506 design; and

507 c. Study of appropriate metrics to be used to describe
508 rural communities or areas, such as population, geographic,
509 demographic, or other metrics, or combinations thereof.

510 2. A survey of local governments meeting the statutory
511 definition of "rural community" or "rural area of opportunity"
512 to assess the benefits to the local government of being
513 identified as such and any perceived unmet needs in the
514 implementation of current statutory provisions designed to
515 support rural communities or areas.

516 3. An analysis of state grant programs and recurring
517 appropriations that explicitly benefit rural communities or
518 areas, including, but not limited to, program purpose, funding
519 amounts, participation rates, and consistency with peer-reviewed
520 studies on effective economic programs for these areas.

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

526 (c) The Office of Economic and Demographic Research and
527 OPPAGA shall submit a report to the President of the Senate and
528 the Speaker of the House of Representatives by December 31,
529 2025. The report must provide recommendations to address any
530 findings, including any changes in statutory definitions or
531 references to rural communities or areas, opportunities to
532 enhance state support to rural communities or areas, outcome
533 measures or other criteria that may be used to examine the



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534 effectiveness of state grant programs for rural communities or
535 areas, and adjustments to program design, including changes to
536 increase participation in state grant programs for rural
537 communities or areas.

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

539 Section 9. Present paragraphs (d) and (e) of subsection (7)
540 of section 288.001, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as
541 paragraphs (e) and (f), respectively, and a new paragraph (d) is
542 added to that subsection, to read:

543 288.001 The Florida Small Business Development Center
544 Network.—

545 (7) ADDITIONAL STATE FUNDS; USES; PAY-PER-PERFORMANCE
546 INCENTIVES; STATEWIDE SERVICE; SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS; BEST
547 PRACTICES; ELIGIBILITY.—

548 (d) Notwithstanding paragraphs (a), (b), and (c), the
549 network shall use funds directly appropriated for the specific
550 purpose of expanding service in rural communities, as defined in
551 s. 288.0656, in addition to any funds allocated by the network
552 from other sources. The network shall use the funds to develop
553 an activity plan focused on network consultants and resources in
554 rural communities. In collaboration with regional economic
555 development organizations as defined in s. 288.018, the plan
556 must provide for either full- or part-time consultants to be
557 available for at least 20 hours per week in rural areas or be
558 permanently stationed in rural areas. This may include
559 establishing a circuit in specific rural locations to ensure the
560 consultants' availability on a regular basis. By using the funds
561 to create a regular presence in rural areas, the network can
562 strengthen community collaboration, raise awareness of available



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563 resources to provide opportunities for new business development
564 or existing business growth, and make professional experience,
565 education, and business information available in these essential
566 communities. The network may dedicate funds to facilitate local
567 or regional events that focus on small business topics, provide
568 consulting services, and leverage partner organizations, such as
569 the regional economic development organizations, local workforce
570 development boards as described in s. 445.07, and Florida
571 College System institutions.

572 Section 10. Section 288.007, Florida Statutes, is amended
573 to read:

574 288.007 Inventory of communities seeking to recruit
575 businesses.—By September 30 of each year, a county or
576 municipality that has a population of at least 25,000 or its
577 local economic development organization, and each local
578 government within a rural area of opportunity as defined in s.
579 288.0656 or its local economic development organization, shall
580 ~~must~~ submit to the department a brief overview of the strengths,
581 services, and economic development incentives that its community
582 offers. The local government or its local economic development
583 organization also shall ~~must~~ identify any industries that it is
584 encouraging to locate or relocate to its area. Unless otherwise
585 required pursuant to this section, a county or municipality
586 having a population of 25,000 or less ~~fewer~~ or its local
587 economic development organization seeking to recruit businesses
588 may submit information as required in this section and may
589 participate in any activity or initiative resulting from the
590 collection, analysis, and reporting of the information to the
591 department pursuant to this section.



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592 Section 11. Section 288.013, Florida Statutes, is created
593 to read:

594 288.013 Office of Rural Prosperity.—

595 (1) The Legislature finds that the unique characteristics
596 and nature of the rural communities in this state are integral
597 to making this state an attractive place to visit, work, and
598 live. Further, the Legislature finds that building a prosperous
599 rural economy and vibrant rural communities is in the best
600 interest of this state. Rural prosperity is integral to
601 supporting this state's infrastructure, housing, and
602 agricultural and food-processing needs, as well as promoting the
603 health and advancement of the overall economy of this state. It
604 is of importance to the state that its rural areas are able to
605 grow, whether locally or in regional partnerships. To better
606 serve rural communities, and in recognition of rural Florida's
607 unique challenges and opportunities, the Office of Rural
608 Prosperity is established to ensure these efforts are
609 coordinated, focused, and effective.

610 (2) The Office of Rural Prosperity is created within the
611 Department of Commerce for the purpose of supporting rural
612 communities by helping rural stakeholders navigate available
613 programs and resources and representing rural interests across
614 state government.

615 (3) The Governor shall appoint a director to lead the
616 office, subject to confirmation by the Senate. The director
617 shall report to the secretary of the department and shall serve
618 at the pleasure of the secretary.

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

620 (a) Serve as the state's point of contact for rural local



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621 governments.

622 (b) Administer the Rural Economic Development Initiative
623 (REDI) pursuant to s. 288.0656.

624 (c) Provide training and technical assistance to rural
625 local governments on a broad range of community and economic
626 development activities. The training and technical assistance
627 may be offered using communications technology or in person and
628 must be recorded and posted to the office's website. The
629 training and technical assistance must include, at a minimum,
630 the following topics:

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

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

636 3. Strategies to address management and administrative
637 capacity challenges unique to rural local governments.

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

640 5. Updates on other recent state and federal laws affecting
641 rural local governments.

642 (d) Create and maintain an online rural resource directory
643 to serve as an interactive tool to navigate the various state
644 and federal resources, tools, and services available to rural
645 local governments. The office shall regularly maintain the
646 resource directory and, to the greatest extent possible, include
647 up-to-date information on state and federal programs, resources,
648 tools, and services that address the needs of rural communities
649 in all areas of governance. Each state agency shall routinely



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650 provide information and updates to the office for maintenance of
651 the resource directory. The resource directory must allow users
652 to search by indicators, such as agency name, resource type, or
653 topic, and include a notification function to allow users to
654 receive alerts when new or modified resources are available. To
655 the greatest extent possible, the resource directory must
656 include information on financial match requirements for the
657 state and federal programs listed in the directory.

658 (5) (a) By October 1, 2025, the office shall establish and
659 staff seven regional rural community liaison centers across this
660 state for the purpose of providing specialized in-person state
661 support to local governments in rural areas of opportunity as
662 defined in s. 288.0656. The department shall by rule divide this
663 state into seven regions and assign a regional rural community
664 liaison center to each region. Each liaison center shall support
665 the local governments within its geographic territory and shall
666 be staffed with at least two full-time department personnel. At
667 a minimum, liaison centers shall have the following powers,
668 duties, and functions:

669 1. Work with local governments to plan and achieve goals
670 for local or regional growth, economic development, and rural
671 prosperity.

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

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

678 4. Coordinate local government technical assistance needs



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679 with the department and other state or federal agencies.

680 5. Promote model ordinances, policies, and strategies
681 related to economic development.

682 6. Assist local governments with regulatory and reporting
683 compliance.

684 (b) To the greatest extent possible, the regional rural
685 community liaison centers shall coordinate with local and
686 regional governmental entities, regional economic development
687 organizations as defined in s. 288.018, and other appropriate
688 entities to establish a network to foster community-driven
689 solutions that promote viable and sustainable rural communities.

690 (c) The regional rural community liaison centers shall
691 regularly engage with the Rural Economic Development Initiative
692 established in s. 288.0656, and at least one staff member from
693 each liaison center shall attend, either in person or by means
694 of electronic communication, the monthly meetings required by s.
695 288.0656(6)(c).

696 (6) By December 1, 2025, and each year thereafter, the
697 director of the office shall submit to the Administration
698 Commission in the Executive Office of the Governor a written
699 report describing the office's operations and accomplishments
700 for the preceding year, inclusive of the Rural Economic
701 Development Initiative report required by s. 288.0656(8). In
702 consultation with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer
703 Services, the office shall also include in the annual report
704 recommendations for policies, programs, and funding to further
705 support the needs of rural communities in this state. The office
706 shall submit the annual report to the President of the Senate
707 and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by December 1 of



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708 each year and publish the annual report on the office's website.
709 The director shall present, in person at the next scheduled
710 Administration Commission meeting, detailed information from the
711 annual report required by this subsection.

712 (7) (a) The Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government
713 Accountability (OPPAGA) shall review the effectiveness of the
714 office by December 15, 2026, and each year thereafter until
715 2028. Beginning in 2029, OPPAGA shall review and evaluate the
716 office every 3 years and shall submit a report based on its
717 findings. Each report must recommend policy and statutory
718 modifications for consideration by the Legislature. OPPAGA shall
719 submit each report to the President of the Senate and the
720 Speaker of the House of Representatives pursuant to the
721 schedule.

722 (b) OPPAGA shall review strategies implemented by other
723 states on rural community preservation, enhancement, and
724 revitalization and report on their effectiveness and potential
725 for implementation in this state. OPPAGA shall include its
726 findings in its report to the President of the Senate and the
727 Speaker of the House of Representatives by December 15, 2027,
728 and every 3 years thereafter.

729 (c)1. OPPAGA shall review each state-funded or state-
730 administered grant and loan program available to local
731 governments to:

732 a. Identify any specified local government financial match
733 requirements and whether any portion of a match may be waived or
734 is required to be waived, pursuant to law, and programs where a
735 financial match waiver may be appropriate for rural local
736 government applicants, if not contemplated by law.



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737 b. Identify grant and loan application evaluation criteria,
738 including scoring procedures, for programs that may be perceived
739 to be overly burdensome for rural local government applicants,
740 and whether special accommodations or preferences for rural
741 local governments may be appropriate.

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

745 3. This paragraph expires June 30, 2027.

746 Section 12. Section 288.014, Florida Statutes, is created
747 to read:

748 288.014 Renaissance Grants Program.—

749 (1) The Legislature finds that it has traditionally
750 provided programs to assist rural communities with economic
751 development and enhance their ability to attract businesses and
752 that, by providing that extra component of economic viability,
753 rural communities are able to attract new businesses and grow
754 existing ones. However, the Legislature finds that a subset of
755 rural communities has decreased in population over the past
756 decade, contributing to a decline in local business activity and
757 economic development. The Legislature further finds that the
758 state must transform its assistance to these specific rural
759 communities to help them achieve a necessary precursor of
760 economic viability. The Legislature further finds that the
761 approach intended by the creation of renaissance grants is to
762 focus on reversing the economic deterioration in rural
763 communities by retaining and attracting residents by giving them
764 a reason to stay, which is the impetus of natural economic
765 growth, business opportunities, and increased quality of life.



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766 (2) The Office of Rural Prosperity within the department
767 shall administer the Renaissance Grants Program to provide block
768 grants to eligible counties. By October 1, 2025, the Office of
769 Economic and Demographic Research shall certify to the Office of
770 Rural Prosperity which counties are growth-impeded. For the
771 purposes of this section, "growth-impeded" means a county that,
772 as of the most recent population estimate, has had a declining
773 population over the last 10 years. After an initial
774 certification, the Office of Economic and Demographic Research
775 shall annually certify whether the county remains growth-
776 impeded, until the county has 3 consecutive years of population
777 growth. Upon such certification of population growth, the county
778 is eligible to participate in the program for 1 additional year
779 in order for the county to prepare for the end of block grant
780 funding.

781 (3) (a) Each participating county shall enter into an
782 agreement with the Office of Rural Prosperity to receive the
783 block grant. Each county has broad authority to design its
784 specific plan to achieve population growth within the broad
785 parameters identified in this section. The Office of Rural
786 Prosperity may not determine the manner in which the county
787 implements the block grant. However, regional rural community
788 liaison center staff shall provide assistance in developing the
789 county's plan, upon request.

790 (b) Each participating county shall report annually to the
791 Office of Rural Prosperity on activities undertaken,
792 intergovernmental agreements entered into, and other information
793 as required by the office.

794 (c) Each participating county shall receive \$1 million from



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795 the funds appropriated to the program. Counties participating in
796 the program shall make all attempts to limit expenses for
797 administrative costs, consistent with the need for prudent
798 management and accountability in the use of public funds. Each
799 county may contribute other funds for block grant purposes,
800 including local, state, or federal grant funds, or seek out in-
801 kind or financial contributions from private or public sources
802 to assist in fulfilling the activities undertaken.

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

806 1. Ensuring that block grant funds are used as provided in
807 this section;

808 2. Coordinating with other local governments, school
809 boards, Florida College System institutions, or other entities;
810 and

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

813 (b) The Office of Rural Prosperity regional rural community
814 liaison center staff shall provide assistance, upon request, and
815 training to the renaissance coordinator to ensure successful
816 implementation of the block grant.

817 (5) A participating county shall design a plan to make
818 targeted investments in the community to achieve population
819 growth and increase the economic vitality of the community. The
820 plan must include the following key features for use of the
821 state support:

822 (a) Technology centers with extended hours located within
823 schools or on school premises, administered by the local school



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824 board, for such schools which provide extended hours and support
825 for access by students.

826 (b) Facilities that colocate adult day care with child care
827 facilities. The site-sharing facilities must be managed to also
828 provide opportunities for direct interaction between generations
829 and increase the health and well-being of both younger and older
830 participants, reduce social isolation, and create cost and time
831 efficiencies for working family members. The regional rural
832 community liaison center staff of the Office of Rural Prosperity
833 shall assist the county, upon request, with bringing to the
834 Rural Economic Development Initiative or directly to the
835 appropriate state agency recommendations necessary to streamline
836 any required state permits, licenses, regulations, or other
837 requirements.

838 (c) Technology labs managed in agreement with the nearest
839 Florida College System institution or a career center as
840 established under s. 1001.44. Repurposing vacant industrial
841 sites or existing office space must be given priority in the
842 selection of lab locations. Each local technology lab must be
843 staffed and open for extended hours with the capacity to
844 provide:

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

847 2. Hands-on assistance with applying for appropriate remote
848 work opportunities; and

849 3. Studio space with equipment for graduates and other
850 qualifying residents to perform remote work that is based on the
851 use of technology. Collaboration with community partners,
852 including the local workforce development board as described in



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853 s. 445.007, to provide training opportunities, in-kind support
854 such as transportation to and from the lab, financing of
855 equipment for in-home use, or basic maintenance of such
856 equipment is required.

857 (6) In addition to the hiring of a renaissance coordinator,
858 a participating county shall develop intergovernmental
859 agreements for shared responsibilities with its municipalities,
860 school board, and Florida College System institution or career
861 center and enter into necessary contracts with providers and
862 community partners in order to implement the plan.

863 (7) (a) Every 2 years, the Auditor General shall conduct an
864 operational audit as defined in s. 11.45 of each county's grant
865 activities, beginning in 2026.

866 (b) On December 31, 2026, and every year thereafter, the
867 Office of Economic and Demographic Research shall submit an
868 annual report of renaissance block grant recipients by county to
869 the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of
870 Representatives. The report must provide key economic indicators
871 that measure progress in altering longer-term trends in the
872 county. The Office of Rural Prosperity shall provide the Office
873 of Economic and Demographic Research with information as
874 requested to complete the report.

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

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

878 Section 13. Section 288.0175, Florida Statutes, is created
879 to read:

880 288.0175 Public Infrastructure Smart Technology Grant
881 Program.—



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882 (1) The Public Infrastructure Smart Technology Grant
883 Program is established within the Office of Rural Prosperity
884 within the department to fund and support the development of
885 public infrastructure smart technology projects in communities
886 located in rural areas of opportunity, subject to legislative
887 appropriation.

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

889 (a) "Public infrastructure smart technology" means systems
890 and applications that use connectivity, data analytics, and
891 automation to improve public infrastructure by increasing
892 efficiency, enhancing public services, and promoting sustainable
893 development.

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

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

900 (3) (a) The Office of Rural Prosperity shall contract with
901 one or more smart technology lead organizations to administer
902 the grant program for the purpose of deploying public
903 infrastructure smart technology in rural communities. In
904 accordance with the terms required by the office, the smart
905 technology lead organization shall provide grants to counties
906 and municipalities located within a rural area of opportunity
907 for public infrastructure smart technology projects.

908 (b) The office's contract with a smart technology lead
909 organization must specify the contract deliverables, including
910 financial reports and other reports due the office, timeframes



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911 for achieving contractual obligations, and any other
912 requirements the office determines are necessary. The contract
913 must require the smart technology lead organization to do the
914 following:

915 1. Collaborate with counties and municipalities located in
916 rural areas of opportunity to identify opportunities for local
917 governments to institute cost-effective smart technology
918 solutions for improving public services and infrastructure.

919 2. Provide technical assistance to counties and
920 municipalities located in rural areas of opportunity in
921 developing plans for public infrastructure smart technology
922 projects.

923 3. Assist counties and municipalities located in rural
924 areas of opportunity in connecting with other communities,
925 companies, and other entities to leverage the impact of each
926 public infrastructure smart technology project.

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

930 Section 14. Subsections (1), (2), and (4) of section
931 288.018, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

932 288.018 Regional Rural Development Grants Program.—

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

937 (b) Subject to appropriation, the Office of Rural
938 Prosperity ~~department~~ shall establish a grant program to provide
939 funding to regional economic development organizations for the



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940 purpose of building the professional capacity of those
941 organizations. Building the professional capacity of a regional
942 economic development organization includes hiring professional
943 staff to develop, deliver, and provide needed economic
944 development professional services, including technical
945 assistance, education and leadership development, marketing, and
946 project recruitment. Grants may also be used by a regional
947 economic development organization to provide technical
948 assistance to local governments, local economic development
949 organizations, and existing and prospective businesses.

950 (c) A regional economic development organization may apply
951 annually to the office department for a grant. The office
952 ~~department~~ is authorized to approve, on an annual basis, grants
953 to such regional economic development organizations. The office
954 may award a maximum amount of \$50,000 in a year to maximum
955 ~~amount an organization may receive in any year will be \$50,000,~~
956 or \$250,000 each to for any three regional economic development
957 organizations that serve an entire region of a rural area of
958 opportunity designated pursuant to s. 288.0656(7) if they are
959 recognized by the office department as serving such a region.

960 (2) In approving the participants, the office department
961 shall require the following:

962 (a) Documentation of official commitments of support from
963 each of the units of local government represented by the
964 regional organization.

965 (b) Demonstration that the organization is in existence and
966 actively involved in economic development activities serving the
967 region.

968 (c) Demonstration of the manner in which the organization



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969 is or will coordinate its efforts with those of other local and
970 state organizations.

971 (4) Except as otherwise provided in the General
972 Appropriations Act, the office department may expend up to
973 \$750,000 each fiscal year from funds appropriated ~~to the Rural~~
974 ~~Community Development Revolving Loan Fund~~ for the purposes
975 outlined in this section.

976 Section 15. Section 288.019, Florida Statutes, is amended
977 to read:

978 288.019 Rural considerations in grant review and evaluation
979 processes; financial match waiver or reduction.-

980 (1) Notwithstanding any other law, and to the fullest
981 extent possible, each agency and organization ~~the member~~
982 ~~agencies and organizations~~ of the Rural Economic Development
983 Initiative (REDI) as defined in s. 288.0656 ~~s. 288.0656(6)(a)~~
984 shall review:

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

989 (b) The financial match requirements for projects in rural
990 communities.

991 (2) ~~(1)~~ Each REDI agency and organization shall consider the
992 impact on and ability of rural communities to meet and be
993 competitive under such criteria, scoring, and requirements. Upon
994 review, each REDI agency and organization shall ~~review all~~
995 ~~evaluation and scoring procedures and~~ develop a proposal for
996 modifications to those procedures which minimize the financial
997 and resource impact to a rural community, including waiver or



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998 reduction of any required financial match requirements ~~impact of~~
999 ~~a project within a rural area.~~

1000 (a) (2) Evaluation criteria and scoring procedures must
1001 provide for an appropriate ranking, when ranking is a component
1002 of the program, based on the proportionate impact that projects
1003 have on a rural area when compared with similar project impacts
1004 on an urban area. Additionally,

1005 ~~(3)~~ evaluation criteria and scoring procedures must
1006 recognize the disparity of available fiscal resources for an
1007 equal level of financial support from an urban county or
1008 municipality and a rural county or municipality.

1009 ~~(a)~~ The evaluation criteria should weight contribution in
1010 proportion to the amount of funding available at the local
1011 level.

1012 (b) Match requirements must be waived or reduced for rural
1013 communities. When appropriate, an in-kind match must ~~should~~ be
1014 allowed and applied as a financial match when a rural community
1015 ~~county~~ is experiencing economic financial distress as defined in
1016 s. 288.0656 through elevated unemployment at a rate in excess of
1017 ~~the state's average by 5 percentage points or because of the~~
1018 ~~loss of its ad valorem base. Donations of land, though usually~~
1019 ~~not recognized as an in-kind match, may be treated as such. As~~
1020 appropriate, each agency and organization that applies for or
1021 receives federal funding must request federal approval to waive
1022 or reduce the financial match requirements, if any, for projects
1023 in rural communities.

1024 ~~(3) (4)~~ For existing programs, The proposal modified
1025 ~~evaluation criteria and scoring procedure must be submitted~~
1026 ~~delivered to the Office of Rural Prosperity department~~ for



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1027 distribution to the REDI agencies and organizations. The REDI
1028 agencies and organizations shall review and make comments and
1029 recommendations that. ~~Future rules, programs, evaluation~~
1030 ~~criteria, and scoring processes must be brought before a REDI~~
1031 ~~meeting for review, discussion, and recommendation to allow~~
1032 rural communities ~~counties~~ fuller access to the state's
1033 resources.

1034 (4) Each REDI agency and organization shall ensure that
1035 related administrative rules or policies are modified, as
1036 necessary, to reflect the finalized proposal and that
1037 information about the authorized wavier or reduction is included
1038 in the online rural resource directory of the Office of Rural
1039 Prosperity required in s. 288.013(4) (d).

1040 (5) The rural liaison from the related regional district
1041 shall assist the rural community to make requests of waiver or
1042 reduction of match.

1043 Section 16. Subsection (3) is added to section 288.021,
1044 Florida Statutes, to read:

1045 288.021 Economic development liaison.—

1046 (3) When practicable, the staff member appointed as the
1047 economic development liaison shall also serve as the agency
1048 representative for the Rural Economic Development Initiative
1049 pursuant to s. 288.0656.

1050 Section 17. Section 288.065, Florida Statutes, is amended
1051 to read:

1052 288.065 Rural Community Development Revolving Loan Fund.—

1053 (1) The Rural Community Development Revolving Loan Fund
1054 Program is established within the Office of Rural Prosperity
1055 ~~department~~ to facilitate the use of existing federal, state, and



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1056 local financial resources by providing local governments with
1057 financial assistance to further promote the economic viability
1058 of rural communities. These funds may be used to finance
1059 initiatives directed toward maintaining or developing the
1060 economic base of rural communities, especially initiatives
1061 addressing employment opportunities for residents of these
1062 communities.

1063 (2) (a) The program shall provide for long-term loans, loan
1064 guarantees, and loan loss reserves to units of local
1065 governments, or economic development organizations substantially
1066 underwritten by a unit of local government.

1067 (b) For purposes of this section, the term "unit of local
1068 government" means:

1069 1. A county ~~within counties~~ with a population ~~populations~~
1070 of 75,000 or less. ~~fewer, or within any~~

1071 2. A county with a population of 125,000 or less ~~fewer~~
1072 which is contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000 or
1073 less. ~~fewer~~

1074 3. A municipality within a county described in subparagraph
1075 1. or subparagraph 2.

1076 4. A county or municipality within a rural area of
1077 opportunity.

1078
1079 For purposes of this paragraph, population is determined in
1080 accordance with the most recent official estimates pursuant to
1081 s. 186.901 and must include those residing in incorporated and
1082 unincorporated areas of a county, ~~based on the most recent~~
1083 official population estimate as determined under s. 186.901,
1084 including those residing in incorporated areas and those



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1085 ~~residing in unincorporated areas of the county, or to units of~~
1086 ~~local government, or economic development organizations~~
1087 ~~substantially underwritten by a unit of local government, within~~
1088 ~~a rural area of opportunity.~~

1089 (c) ~~(b)~~ Requests for loans must ~~shall~~ be made by application
1090 to the office ~~department~~. Loans must ~~shall~~ be made pursuant to
1091 agreements specifying the terms and conditions agreed to between
1092 the applicant and the office ~~department~~. The loans are ~~shall be~~
1093 the legal obligations of the applicant.

1094 (d) ~~(e)~~ All repayments of principal and interest shall be
1095 returned to the loan fund and made available for loans to other
1096 applicants. However, in a rural area of opportunity designated
1097 under s. 288.0656 ~~by the Governor~~, and upon approval by the
1098 office ~~department~~, repayments of principal and interest may be
1099 retained by the applicant if such repayments are dedicated and
1100 matched to fund regionally based economic development
1101 organizations representing the rural area of opportunity.

1102 (3) The office ~~department~~ shall manage the fund,
1103 establishing loan practices that must include, but are not
1104 limited to, procedures for establishing loan interest rates,
1105 uses of funding, application procedures, and application review
1106 procedures. The office ~~has~~ ~~department~~ ~~shall have~~ final approval
1107 authority for any loan under this section.

1108 (4) Notwithstanding ~~the provisions of~~ s. 216.301, funds
1109 appropriated for this loan fund ~~may purpose~~ ~~shall~~ not be subject
1110 to reversion.

1111 (5) The office shall include in its annual report required
1112 under s. 288.013 detailed information about the fund, including
1113 loans made during the previous fiscal year, loans active, loans



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1114 terminated or repaid, and the amount of funds not obligated as
1115 of 14 days before the date the report is due.

1116 Section 18. Subsections (1), (2), and (3) of section
1117 288.0655, Florida Statutes, are amended, and subsection (6) is
1118 added to that section, to read:

1119 288.0655 Rural Infrastructure Fund.—

1120 (1) There is created within the Office of Rural Prosperity
1121 ~~department~~ the Rural Infrastructure Fund to facilitate the
1122 planning, preparing, and financing of infrastructure projects in
1123 rural communities which will encourage job creation, capital
1124 investment, and the strengthening and diversification of rural
1125 economies by promoting tourism, trade, and economic development.
1126 Grants under this program may be awarded to a unit of local
1127 government within a rural community or rural area of opportunity
1128 as defined in s. 288.0656; or to a regional economic development
1129 organization, a unit of local government, or an economic
1130 development organization substantially underwritten by a unit of
1131 local government for an infrastructure project located within an
1132 unincorporated area that has a population of 15,000 or less, has
1133 been in existence for 100 years or more, is contiguous to a
1134 rural community, and has been adversely affected by a natural
1135 disaster or presents a unique economic development opportunity
1136 of regional impact.

1137 (2) (a) Funds appropriated by the Legislature shall be
1138 distributed by the office ~~department~~ through grant programs that
1139 maximize the use of federal, local, and private resources,
1140 including, but not limited to, those available under the Small
1141 Cities Community Development Block Grant Program.

1142 (b) To facilitate access of rural communities and rural



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1143 areas of opportunity as defined by the Rural Economic
1144 Development Initiative to infrastructure funding programs of the
1145 Federal Government, such as those offered by the United States
1146 Department of Agriculture and the United States Department of
1147 Commerce, and state programs, including those offered by Rural
1148 Economic Development Initiative agencies, and to facilitate
1149 local government or private infrastructure funding efforts, the
1150 office department may award grants for up to 75 percent of the
1151 total infrastructure project cost, or up to 100 percent of the
1152 total infrastructure project cost for a project located in a
1153 rural community as defined in s. 288.0656(2) which is also
1154 located in a fiscally constrained county as defined in s.
1155 218.67(1) or a rural area of opportunity as defined in s.
1156 288.0656(2). Eligible uses of funds may include improving any
1157 inadequate infrastructure that has resulted in regulatory action
1158 that prohibits economic or community growth and reducing the
1159 costs to community users of proposed infrastructure improvements
1160 that exceed such costs in comparable communities. Eligible uses
1161 of funds include improvements to public infrastructure for
1162 industrial or commercial sites and upgrades to or development of
1163 public tourism infrastructure. Authorized infrastructure may
1164 include the following public or public-private partnership
1165 facilities: storm water systems; telecommunications facilities;
1166 roads or other remedies to transportation impediments; nature-
1167 based tourism facilities; or other physical requirements
1168 necessary to facilitate tourism, trade, and economic development
1169 activities in the community. Authorized infrastructure may also
1170 include publicly or privately owned self-powered nature-based
1171 tourism facilities, publicly owned telecommunications



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1172 facilities, and additions to the distribution facilities of the
1173 existing natural gas utility as defined in s. 366.04(3)(c), the
1174 existing electric utility as defined in s. 366.02, or the
1175 existing water or wastewater utility as defined in s.
1176 367.021(12), or any other existing water or wastewater facility,
1177 which owns a gas or electric distribution system or a water or
1178 wastewater system in this state when:

1179 1. A contribution-in-aid of construction is required to
1180 serve public or public-private partnership facilities under the
1181 tariffs of any natural gas, electric, water, or wastewater
1182 utility as defined herein; and

1183 2. Such utilities as defined herein are willing and able to
1184 provide such service.

1185 (c) The office department may award grants of up to
1186 \$300,000 for infrastructure feasibility studies, design and
1187 engineering activities, or other infrastructure planning and
1188 preparation or site readiness activities. Site readiness
1189 expenses may include clearing title, surveys, permitting,
1190 environmental studies, and regulatory compliance costs. Grants
1191 awarded under this paragraph may be used in conjunction with
1192 grants awarded under paragraph (b). In evaluating applications
1193 under this paragraph, the office department shall consider the
1194 extent to which the application seeks to minimize administrative
1195 and consultant expenses.

1196 (d) The office department shall participate in a memorandum
1197 of agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture
1198 under which state funds available through the Rural
1199 Infrastructure Fund may be advanced, in excess of the prescribed
1200 state share, for a project that has received from the United



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1201 States Department of Agriculture a preliminary determination of
1202 eligibility for federal financial support. State funds in excess
1203 of the prescribed state share which are advanced pursuant to
1204 this paragraph and the memorandum of agreement shall be
1205 reimbursed when funds are awarded under an application for
1206 federal funding.

1207 (e) To enable local governments to access the resources
1208 available pursuant to s. 403.973(17), the office department may
1209 award grants for surveys, feasibility studies, and other
1210 activities related to the identification and preclearance review
1211 of land which is suitable for preclearance review. Authorized
1212 grants under this paragraph may not exceed \$75,000 each, except
1213 in the case of a project in a rural area of opportunity, in
1214 which case the grant may not exceed \$300,000. Any funds awarded
1215 under this paragraph must be matched at a level of 50 percent
1216 with local funds, except that any funds awarded for a project in
1217 a rural area of opportunity do not require a match of local
1218 funds. ~~If an application for funding is for a catalyst site, as~~
1219 ~~defined in s. 288.0656, the requirement for local match may be~~
1220 ~~waived pursuant to the process in s. 288.06561.~~ In evaluating
1221 applications under this paragraph, the office department shall
1222 consider the extent to which the application seeks to minimize
1223 administrative and consultant expenses.

1224 (3) The office department, in consultation with the
1225 Department of Transportation Florida Tourism Industry Marketing
1226 Corporation, the Department of Environmental Protection, and the
1227 Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, as
1228 appropriate, shall review and certify applications pursuant to
1229 s. 288.061. The review must include an evaluation of the



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1230 economic benefit and long-term viability. The office has
1231 ~~department shall have~~ final approval for any grant under this
1232 section.

1233 (6) The office shall include in its annual report required
1234 under s. 288.013 detailed information about the fund, including
1235 grants made for the year, grants active, grants terminated or
1236 complete, and the amount of funds not obligated as of 14 days
1237 before the date the report is due.

1238 Section 19. Subsection (1), paragraphs (a), (b), and (e) of
1239 subsection (2), subsections (3) and (6), paragraphs (b) and (c)
1240 of subsection (7), and subsection (8) of section 288.0656,
1241 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1242 288.0656 Rural Economic Development Initiative.—

1243 (1) (a) Recognizing that rural communities and regions
1244 continue to face extraordinary challenges in their efforts to
1245 significantly improve their economies, specifically in terms of
1246 personal income, job creation, average wages, and strong tax
1247 bases, it is the intent of the Legislature to encourage and
1248 facilitate the location and expansion of major economic
1249 development projects of significant scale in such rural
1250 communities. The Legislature finds that rural communities are
1251 the essential conduits for the economy's distribution,
1252 manufacturing, and food supply.

1253 (b) The Rural Economic Development Initiative, known as
1254 "REDI," is created within the Office of Rural Prosperity
1255 ~~department, and all the participation of~~ state and regional
1256 agencies listed in paragraph (6) (a) shall participate in this
1257 initiative is authorized.

1258 (2) As used in this section, the term:



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1259 ~~(a) "Catalyst project" means a business locating or~~
1260 ~~expanding in a rural area of opportunity to serve as an economic~~
1261 ~~generator of regional significance for the growth of a regional~~
1262 ~~target industry cluster. The project must provide capital~~
1263 ~~investment on a scale significant enough to affect the entire~~
1264 ~~region and result in the development of high-wage and high-skill~~
1265 ~~jobs.~~

1266 ~~(b) "Catalyst site" means a parcel or parcels of land~~
1267 ~~within a rural area of opportunity that has been prioritized as~~
1268 ~~a geographic site for economic development through partnerships~~
1269 ~~with state, regional, and local organizations. The site must be~~
1270 ~~reviewed by REDI and approved by the department for the purposes~~
1271 ~~of locating a catalyst project.~~

1272 ~~(c)(e) "Rural community" means:~~

1273 1. A county with a population of 75,000 or less ~~fewer~~.

1274 2. A county with a population of 125,000 or less ~~fewer~~

1275 which is contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000 or
1276 less ~~fewer~~.

1277 3. A municipality within a county described in subparagraph
1278 1. or subparagraph 2.

1279 4. An unincorporated federal enterprise community or an
1280 incorporated rural city with a population of 25,000 or less
1281 ~~fewer~~ and an employment base focused on traditional agricultural
1282 or resource-based industries, located in a county not defined as
1283 rural, which has at least three or more of the economic distress
1284 factors identified in paragraph (a) ~~paragraph (e)~~ and verified
1285 by the office ~~department~~.

1286
1287 For purposes of this paragraph, population shall be determined



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1288 in accordance with the most recent official estimate pursuant to
1289 s. 186.901.

1290 (3) REDI shall be responsible for coordinating and focusing
1291 the efforts and resources of state and regional agencies on the
1292 problems which affect the fiscal, economic, and community
1293 viability of Florida's ~~economically distressed~~ rural
1294 communities, working with local governments, community-based
1295 organizations, and private organizations that have an interest
1296 in the growth and development of these communities to find ways
1297 to balance environmental and growth management issues with local
1298 needs.

1299 (6) (a) By August 1 of each year, the head of each of the
1300 following agencies and organizations shall designate a deputy
1301 secretary or higher-level staff person from within the agency or
1302 organization to serve as the REDI representative for the agency
1303 or organization:

- 1304 1. The Department of Transportation.
- 1305 2. The Department of Environmental Protection.
- 1306 3. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.
- 1307 4. The Department of State.
- 1308 5. The Department of Health.
- 1309 6. The Department of Children and Families.
- 1310 7. The Department of Corrections.
- 1311 8. The Department of Education.
- 1312 9. The Department of Juvenile Justice.
- 1313 10. The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.
- 1314 11. Each water management district.
- 1315 12. CareerSource Florida, Inc.
- 1316 13. VISIT Florida.



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1317 14. The Florida Regional Planning Council Association.
1318 15. The Agency for Health Care Administration.
1319 16. The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS).
1320 (b) An alternate for each designee must ~~shall~~ also be
1321 chosen, who must also be a deputy secretary or higher-level
1322 staff person, and the names of the designees and alternates must
1323 shall be reported sent to the director of the Office of Rural
1324 Prosperity. At least one rural liaison from each regional rural
1325 community liaison center must participate in the REDI meetings
1326 Secretary of Commerce.
1327 (c) REDI shall meet at least each month, but may meet more
1328 often as necessary. Each REDI representative, or his or her
1329 designee, shall be physically present or available by means of
1330 electronic communication for each meeting.
1331 (d) ~~(b)~~ Each REDI representative must have comprehensive
1332 knowledge of his or her agency's functions, both regulatory and
1333 service in nature, and of the state's economic goals, policies,
1334 and programs. This person shall be the primary point of contact
1335 for his or her agency with REDI on issues and projects relating
1336 to ~~economically distressed~~ rural communities and with regard to
1337 expediting project review, shall ensure a prompt effective
1338 response to problems arising with regard to rural issues, and
1339 shall work closely with the other REDI representatives in the
1340 identification of opportunities for preferential awards of
1341 program funds, contractual or other agreement provisions which
1342 meet the requirements of s. 215.971, and allowances and waiver
1343 of program requirements when necessary to encourage and
1344 facilitate long-term private capital investment and job
1345 creation.



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1346 (e) ~~(e)~~ The REDI representatives shall work with REDI in the
1347 review and evaluation of statutes and rules for adverse impact
1348 on rural communities and the development of alternative
1349 proposals to mitigate that impact.

1350 (f) ~~(d)~~ Each REDI representative shall be responsible for
1351 ensuring that each district office or facility of his or her
1352 agency is informed quarterly about the Rural Economic
1353 Development Initiative and for providing assistance throughout
1354 the agency in the implementation of REDI activities.

1355 (7)

1356 (b) Designation as a rural area of opportunity under this
1357 subsection shall be contingent upon the execution of a
1358 memorandum of agreement among the office ~~department~~; the
1359 governing body of the county; and the governing bodies of any
1360 municipalities to be included within a rural area of
1361 opportunity. Such agreement shall specify the terms and
1362 conditions of the designation, including, but not limited to,
1363 the duties and responsibilities of the county and any
1364 participating municipalities to take actions designed to
1365 facilitate the retention and expansion of existing businesses in
1366 the area, as well as the recruitment of new businesses to the
1367 area.

1368 ~~(c) Each rural area of opportunity may designate catalyst
1369 projects, provided that each catalyst project is specifically
1370 recommended by REDI and confirmed as a catalyst project by the
1371 department. All state agencies and departments shall use all
1372 available tools and resources to the extent permissible by law
1373 to promote the creation and development of each catalyst project
1374 and the development of catalyst sites.~~



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1375 (8) REDI shall submit a report to the Office of Rural
1376 Prosperity department on all REDI activities for the previous
1377 fiscal year as a supplement to the office's department's annual
1378 report required under s. 288.013 s. 20.60. This supplementary
1379 report must include:

1380 (a) A status report on every project all projects currently
1381 being coordinated through REDI, the number of preferential
1382 awards and allowances made pursuant to this section in detail by
1383 award, allowance, or match type, the dollar amount of such
1384 awards, and the names of the recipients.

1385 (b) A description of all waivers of program requirements
1386 granted, including a list by program of each waiver that was
1387 granted. If waivers were requested but were not granted, a list
1388 of ungranted waivers, including reasons why the waivers were not
1389 granted, must be included.

1390 (c) Detailed information as to the economic impact of the
1391 projects coordinated by REDI.

1392 (d) Recommendations based on the review and evaluation of
1393 statutes and rules having an adverse impact on rural communities
1394 and proposals to mitigate such adverse impacts.

1395 (e) Legislative recommendations for statutory waivers or
1396 reductions of specified economic development program
1397 requirements, including financial match waivers or reductions,
1398 for applicants within rural areas of opportunity.

1399 (f) Outcomes of proposals submitted pursuant to s. 288.019.
1400 Section 20. Section 288.06561, Florida Statutes, is
1401 repealed.

1402 Section 21. Subsections (2), (3), and (4) of section
1403 288.0657, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:



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1404 288.0657 Florida rural economic development strategy
1405 grants.-

1406 (2) The Office of Rural Prosperity shall provide ~~department~~
1407 ~~may accept and administer moneys appropriated to the department~~
1408 ~~for providing~~ grants to assist rural communities to develop and
1409 implement strategic economic development plans. Grants may be
1410 provided to assist with costs associated with marketing a site
1411 to business and site selectors for an economic development
1412 project that is part of an economic development plan, either as
1413 part of funding to develop and implement a plan or related to an
1414 already adopted plan.

1415 (3) A rural community, an economic development organization
1416 in a rural area, or a regional organization representing at
1417 least one rural community or such economic development
1418 organizations may apply for such grants. The rural liaison for
1419 the rural community shall assist those applying for such grants.

1420 (4) The office ~~department~~ shall establish criteria for
1421 reviewing grant applications. These criteria must ~~shall~~ include,
1422 but are not limited to, the degree of participation and
1423 commitment by the local community and the application's
1424 consistency with local comprehensive plans or the application's
1425 proposal to ensure such consistency. Grants for marketing may
1426 include funding for advertising campaign materials and costs
1427 associated with meetings, trade missions, and professional
1428 development affiliated with site preparation and marketing. The
1429 office ~~department~~ shall review each application for a grant. ~~The~~
1430 ~~department may approve grants only to the extent that funds are~~
1431 ~~appropriated for such grants by the Legislature.~~

1432 Section 22. Paragraph (a) of subsection (13) of section



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1433 288.1226, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1434 288.1226 Florida Tourism Industry Marketing Corporation;
1435 use of property; board of directors; duties; audit.—

1436 (13) FOUR-YEAR MARKETING PLAN.—

1437 (a) The corporation shall, in collaboration with the
1438 department, develop a 4-year marketing plan. At a minimum, the
1439 marketing plan must discuss the following:

1440 1. Continuation of overall tourism growth in this state.

1441 2. Expansion to new or under-represented tourist markets.

1442 3. Maintenance of traditional and loyal tourist markets.

1443 4. Coordination of efforts with county destination
1444 marketing organizations, other local government marketing
1445 groups, privately owned attractions and destinations, and other
1446 private sector partners to create a seamless, four-season
1447 advertising campaign for the state and its regions.

1448 5. Development of innovative techniques or promotions to
1449 build repeat visitation by targeted segments of the tourist
1450 population.

1451 6. Consideration of innovative sources of state funding for
1452 tourism marketing.

1453 7. Promotion of nature-based tourism, including, but not
1454 limited to, promotion of the Florida Greenways and Trails System
1455 as described under s. 260.014 and the Florida Shared-Use
1456 Nonmotorized Trail Network as described under s. 339.81.

1457 8. Coordination of efforts with the Office of Greenways and
1458 Trails of the Department of Environmental Protection and the
1459 department to promote and assist local communities, including,
1460 but not limited to, communities designated as trail towns by the
1461 Office of Greenways and Trails, to maximize use of nearby trails



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1462 as economic assets, including specific promotion of trail-based
1463 tourism.

1464 9. Promotion of heritage tourism.

1465 10. Development of a component to address emergency
1466 response to natural and manmade disasters from a marketing
1467 standpoint.

1468 11. Provision of appropriate marketing assistance resources
1469 to small, rural, and agritourism businesses located in this
1470 state. Such resources may include, but are not limited to,
1471 marketing plans, marketing assistance, promotional support,
1472 media development, technical expertise, marketing advice,
1473 technology training, and social marketing support.

1474 Section 23. Section 288.12266, Florida Statutes, is
1475 repealed.

1476 Section 24. Paragraph (f) of subsection (2) and paragraphs
1477 (a), (b), and (c) of subsection (4) of section 288.9961, Florida
1478 Statutes, are amended, and subsections (6) and (7) are added to
1479 that section, to read:

1480 288.9961 Promotion of broadband adoption; Florida Office of
1481 Broadband.—

1482 (2) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:

1483 (f) "Underserved" means a geographic area of this state in
1484 which there is no provider of broadband Internet service that
1485 offers a connection to the Internet with a capacity for
1486 transmission at a consistent speed of at least 100 megabits per
1487 second downstream and at least 20 ~~10~~ megabits per second
1488 upstream.

1489 (4) FLORIDA OFFICE OF BROADBAND.—The Florida Office of
1490 Broadband is created within the Division of Community



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1491 Development in the department for the purpose of developing,
1492 marketing, and promoting broadband Internet services in this
1493 state. The office, in the performance of its duties, shall do
1494 all of the following:

1495 (a) Create a strategic plan that has goals and strategies
1496 for increasing and improving the availability of, access to, and
1497 use of broadband Internet service in this state. In development
1498 of the plan, the department shall incorporate applicable federal
1499 broadband activities, including any efforts or initiatives of
1500 the Federal Communications Commission, to improve broadband
1501 Internet service in this state. The plan must identify available
1502 federal funding sources for the expansion or improvement of
1503 broadband. The strategic plan must be submitted to the Governor,
1504 the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of
1505 Representatives by June 30, 2022. The strategic plan must be
1506 updated biennially thereafter. The plan must include a process
1507 to review and verify public input regarding transmission speeds
1508 and availability of broadband Internet service throughout this
1509 state. The office shall consult with each regional rural
1510 community liaison center within the Office of Rural Prosperity
1511 on the development and update of the plan.

1512 (b) Build and facilitate local technology planning teams or
1513 partnerships with members representing cross-sections of the
1514 community, which may include, but are not limited to,
1515 representatives from the following organizations and industries:
1516 libraries, K-12 education, colleges and universities, local
1517 health care providers, private businesses, community
1518 organizations, economic development organizations, local
1519 governments, tourism, parks and recreation, and agriculture. The



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1520 local technology planning teams or partnerships shall work with
1521 rural communities to help the communities understand their
1522 current broadband availability, locate unserved and underserved
1523 businesses and residents, identify assets relevant to broadband
1524 deployment, build partnerships with broadband service providers,
1525 and identify opportunities to leverage assets and reduce
1526 barriers to the deployment of broadband Internet services in the
1527 community. The teams or partnerships must be proactive in rural
1528 communities as defined in s. 288.0656 ~~fiscally constrained~~
1529 ~~counties~~ in identifying and providing assistance, in
1530 coordination with the regional rural community liaison centers
1531 within the Office of Rural Prosperity, with applying for federal
1532 grants for broadband Internet service.

1533 (c) Provide technical and planning assistance to rural
1534 communities in coordination with the regional rural community
1535 liaison centers within the Office of Rural Prosperity.

1536 (6) The office shall submit to the Governor, the President
1537 of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives a
1538 quarterly report detailing the implementation of broadband
1539 activities in rural, unserved, and underserved communities. Such
1540 information must be listed by county and include the amount of
1541 state and federal funds allocated and expended in the county by
1542 program; the progress toward deploying broadband in the county;
1543 any technical assistance provided; the activities of the local
1544 technology planning teams and partnerships; and the fulfillment
1545 of any other duties of the office required by this part.

1546 (7) By December 31 each year, the office shall submit to
1547 the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of
1548 the House of Representatives an annual report on the office's



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1549 operations and accomplishments for that calendar year and the
1550 status of broadband Internet service access and use in this
1551 state. The report must also incorporate the quarterly reports on
1552 rural, unserved, and underserved communities required by
1553 subsection (6).

1554 Section 25. Section 290.06561, Florida Statutes, is
1555 repealed.

1556 Section 26. Paragraph (a) of subsection (5) of section
1557 319.32, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1558 319.32 Fees; service charges; disposition.—

1559 (5) (a) Forty-seven dollars of each fee collected, except
1560 for fees charged on a certificate of title for a motor vehicle
1561 for hire registered under s. 320.08(6), for each applicable
1562 original certificate of title and each applicable duplicate copy
1563 of a certificate of title shall be deposited as follows: into
1564 ~~the State Transportation Trust Fund. Deposits to the State~~
1565 ~~Transportation Trust Fund pursuant to this paragraph may not~~
1566 ~~exceed \$200 million in any fiscal year, and from any collections~~
1567 ~~in excess of that amount during the fiscal year,~~

1568 1. The first \$30 million collected shall be deposited into
1569 the Highway Safety Operating Trust Fund;7 and

1570 2. Any remaining collections shall be paid into the State
1571 Transportation Trust General Revenue Fund.

1572 Section 27. Subsection (1) of section 322.095, Florida
1573 Statutes, is amended to read:

1574 322.095 Traffic law and substance abuse education program
1575 for driver license applicants.—

1576 (1) Each applicant for a driver license who is 18 years of
1577 age or older must complete a traffic law and substance abuse



1578 education course, unless the applicant has been licensed in
1579 another jurisdiction or has satisfactorily completed a
1580 Department of Education driver education course offered pursuant
1581 to s. 1003.48.

1582 Section 28. Subsection (1) of section 322.1615, Florida
1583 Statutes, is amended to read:

1584 322.1615 Learner's driver license.—

1585 (1) The department may issue a learner's driver license to
1586 a person who is at least 15 years of age and who:

1587 (a) Has passed the written examination for a learner's
1588 driver license;

1589 (b) Has passed the vision and hearing examination
1590 administered under s. 322.12;

1591 (c) Has satisfactorily completed a driver education course
1592 approved by the department which meets or exceeds the Department
1593 of Education Driver Education/Traffic Safety-Classroom 1900300
1594 course version description ~~the traffic law and substance abuse~~
1595 ~~education course prescribed in s. 322.095; and~~

1596 (d) Meets all other requirements set forth in law and by
1597 rule of the department.

1598 Section 29. Subsection (37) is added to section 334.044,
1599 Florida Statutes, to read:

1600 334.044 Powers and duties of the department.—The department
1601 shall have the following general powers and duties:

1602 (37) To provide technical assistance and support from the
1603 appropriate district of the department to counties that are not
1604 located in a metropolitan planning organization created pursuant
1605 to s. 339.175.

1606 Section 30. Section 339.0801, Florida Statutes, is amended



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1607 to read:

1608 339.0801 Allocation of increased revenues derived from
1609 amendments to s. 319.32(5) (a) ~~by ch. 2012-128.~~

1610 (1) The first \$200 million of funds that result from
1611 increased revenues to the State Transportation Trust Fund
1612 derived from the amendments to s. 319.32(5) (a) made by s. 11,
1613 chapter 2012-128, Laws of Florida, ~~this act~~ must be used
1614 annually, first as set forth in paragraph (a) ~~subsection (1)~~ and
1615 then as set forth in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) ~~subsections~~
1616 ~~(2)-(4)~~, notwithstanding any other provision of law:

1617 (a) ~~1.(1)(a)~~ Beginning in the 2013-2014 fiscal year and
1618 annually for 30 years thereafter, \$10 million shall be for the
1619 purpose of funding any seaport project identified in the adopted
1620 work program of the Department of Transportation, to be known as
1621 the Seaport Investment Program.

1622 ~~2.(b)~~ The revenues may be assigned, pledged, or set aside
1623 as a trust for the payment of principal or interest on revenue
1624 bonds, or other forms of indebtedness issued by an individual
1625 port or appropriate local government having jurisdiction
1626 thereof, or collectively by interlocal agreement among any of
1627 the ports, or used to purchase credit support to permit such
1628 borrowings. Alternatively, revenue bonds shall be issued by the
1629 Division of Bond Finance at the request of the Department of
1630 Transportation under the State Bond Act and shall be secured by
1631 such revenues as are provided in this subsection.

1632 ~~3.(e)~~ Revenue bonds or other indebtedness issued hereunder
1633 are not a general obligation of the state and are secured solely
1634 by a first lien on the revenues distributed under this
1635 subsection.



1636 4.~~(d)~~ The state covenants with holders of the revenue bonds
1637 or other instruments of indebtedness issued pursuant to this
1638 subsection that it will not repeal this subsection; nor take any
1639 other action, including but not limited to amending this
1640 subsection, that will materially and adversely affect the rights
1641 of such holders so long as revenue bonds or other indebtedness
1642 authorized by this subsection are outstanding.

1643 5.~~(e)~~ The proceeds of any revenue bonds or other
1644 indebtedness, after payment of costs of issuance and
1645 establishment of any required reserves, shall be invested in
1646 projects approved by the Department of Transportation and
1647 included in the department's adopted work program, by amendment
1648 if necessary. As required under s. 11(f), Art. VII of the State
1649 Constitution, the Legislature approves projects included in the
1650 department's adopted work program, including any projects added
1651 to the work program by amendment under s. 339.135(7).

1652 6.~~(f)~~ Any revenues that are not used for the payment of
1653 bonds as authorized by this subsection may be used for purposes
1654 authorized under the Florida Seaport Transportation and Economic
1655 Development Program. This revenue source is in addition to any
1656 amounts provided for and appropriated in accordance with ss.
1657 311.07 and 320.20(3) and (4).

1658 (b)~~(2)~~ Beginning in the 2013-2014 fiscal year and annually
1659 thereafter, \$10 million shall be transferred to the
1660 Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund, to be used as specified
1661 in s. 427.0159.

1662 (c)~~(3)~~ Beginning in the 2013-2014 fiscal year and annually
1663 thereafter, \$10 million shall be allocated to the Small County
1664 Outreach Program to be used as specified in s. 339.2818. These



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1665 funds are in addition to the funds provided for the program
1666 pursuant to s. 201.15(4)(a)2.

1667 (d)~~(4)~~ After the distributions required pursuant to
1668 paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) subsections (1)-(3), the remaining
1669 funds shall be used annually for transportation projects within
1670 this state for existing or planned strategic transportation
1671 projects which connect major markets within this state or
1672 between this state and other states, which focus on job
1673 creation, and which increase this state's viability in the
1674 national and global markets.

1675 (2) The remaining funds that result from increased revenue
1676 to the State Transportation Trust Fund derived pursuant to s.
1677 319.32(5)(a) must be used annually, notwithstanding any other
1678 law, beginning in the 2025-2026 fiscal year and annually
1679 thereafter, for the Small County Road Assistance Program as
1680 prescribed in s. 339.2816.

1681 (3)~~(5)~~ Pursuant to s. 339.135(7), the department shall
1682 amend the work program to add the projects provided for in this
1683 section.

1684 Section 31. Paragraph (a) of subsection (4) of section
1685 339.135, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1686 339.135 Work program; legislative budget request;
1687 definitions; preparation, adoption, execution, and amendment.-

1688 (4) FUNDING AND DEVELOPING A TENTATIVE WORK PROGRAM.-

1689 (a)1. To assure that no district or county is penalized for
1690 local efforts to improve the State Highway System, the
1691 department shall, for the purpose of developing a tentative work
1692 program, allocate funds for new construction to the districts,
1693 except for the turnpike enterprise, based on equal parts of



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1694 population and motor fuel tax collections. Funds for
1695 resurfacing, bridge repair and rehabilitation, bridge fender
1696 system construction or repair, public transit projects except
1697 public transit block grants as provided in s. 341.052 and rural
1698 transit operating block grants as provided in s. 341.0525, and
1699 other programs with quantitative needs assessments shall be
1700 allocated based on the results of these assessments. The
1701 department may not transfer any funds allocated to a district
1702 under this paragraph to any other district except as provided in
1703 subsection (7). Funds for public transit block grants shall be
1704 allocated to the districts pursuant to s. 341.052. Funds for
1705 rural transit operating block grants shall be allocated to the
1706 districts pursuant to s. 341.0525. Funds for the intercity bus
1707 program provided for under s. 5311(f) of the federal
1708 nonurbanized area formula program shall be administered and
1709 allocated directly to eligible bus carriers as defined in s.
1710 341.031(12) at the state level rather than the district. In
1711 order to provide state funding to support the intercity bus
1712 program provided for under provisions of the federal 5311(f)
1713 program, the department shall allocate an amount equal to the
1714 federal share of the 5311(f) program from amounts calculated
1715 pursuant to s. 206.46(3).

1716 2. Notwithstanding the provisions of subparagraph 1., the
1717 department shall allocate at least 50 percent of any new
1718 discretionary highway capacity funds to the Florida Strategic
1719 Intermodal System created pursuant to s. 339.61. Any remaining
1720 new discretionary highway capacity funds shall be allocated to
1721 the districts for new construction as provided in subparagraph
1722 1. For the purposes of this subparagraph, the term "new



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1723 discretionary highway capacity funds" means any funds available
1724 to the department above the prior year funding level for
1725 capacity improvements, which the department has the discretion
1726 to allocate to highway projects.

1727 Section 32. Subsection (3) and paragraph (a) of subsection
1728 (4) of section 339.2816, Florida Statutes, are amended, and
1729 paragraph (c) of subsection (4) of that section is reenacted, to
1730 read:

1731 339.2816 Small County Road Assistance Program.—

1732 (3) Beginning with fiscal year ~~1999-2000 until fiscal year~~
1733 ~~2009-2010, and beginning again with fiscal year 2012-2013, up to~~
1734 \$25 million annually from the State Transportation Trust Fund
1735 must ~~may~~ be used for the purposes of funding the Small County
1736 Road Assistance Program as described in this section. In
1737 addition, beginning with fiscal year 2025-2026, the department
1738 must use the additional revenues allocated by s. 339.0801 for
1739 the Small County Road Assistance Program.

1740 (4) (a) Small counties shall be eligible to compete for
1741 funds that have been designated for the Small County Road
1742 Assistance Program for resurfacing or reconstruction projects on
1743 county roads that were part of the county road system on June
1744 10, 1995. Capacity improvements on county roads are ~~shall~~ ~~be~~
1745 eligible for funding under the program unless a safety issue
1746 exists or the department finds it necessary to widen existing
1747 lanes as part of a resurfacing or reconstruction project.

1748 (c) The following criteria must be used to prioritize road
1749 projects for funding under the program:

1750 1. The primary criterion is the physical condition of the
1751 road as measured by the department.



- 1752 2. As secondary criteria the department may consider:
- 1753 a. Whether a road is used as an evacuation route.
- 1754 b. Whether a road has high levels of agricultural travel.
- 1755 c. Whether a road is considered a major arterial route.
- 1756 d. Whether a road is considered a feeder road.
- 1757 e. Whether a road is located in a fiscally constrained
- 1758 county, as defined in s. 218.67(1).
- 1759 f. Other criteria related to the impact of a project on the
- 1760 public road system or on the state or local economy as
- 1761 determined by the department.

1762 Section 33. Subsection (3) of section 339.2817, Florida

1763 Statutes, is amended, and a new subsection (6) is added to that

1764 section, to read:

1765 339.2817 County Incentive Grant Program.—

1766 (3) The department must consider, but is not limited to,

1767 the following criteria for evaluation of projects for County

1768 Incentive Grant Program assistance:

1769 (a) The extent to which the project will encourage,

1770 enhance, or create economic benefits;

1771 (b) The likelihood that assistance would enable the project

1772 to proceed at an earlier date than the project could otherwise

1773 proceed;

1774 (c) The extent to which assistance would foster innovative

1775 public-private partnerships and attract private debt or equity

1776 investment;

1777 (d) The extent to which the project uses new technologies,

1778 including intelligent transportation systems, which enhance the

1779 efficiency of the project;

1780 (e) The extent to which the project enhances connectivity



1781 between rural agricultural areas and market distribution
1782 centers;

1783 (f)(e) The extent to which the project helps to maintain or
1784 protect the environment; and

1785 (g)(f) The extent to which the project includes
1786 transportation benefits for improving intermodalism and safety.

1787 (6) Beginning in the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the department
1788 shall give priority to a county located either wholly or
1789 partially within the Everglades Agricultural Area as defined in
1790 s. 373.4592(15) which, notwithstanding subsection (4), requests
1791 100 percent of the project costs for an eligible project that
1792 meets the criteria established in paragraph (3) (e). Requests
1793 under this subsection are limited to \$15 million annually. This
1794 subsection expires July 1, 2031.

1795 Section 34. Subsections (1), (2), (3), (6), (7), and (8) of
1796 section 339.2818, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1797 339.2818 Small County Outreach Program.—

1798 (1) There is created within the department ~~of~~
1799 ~~Transportation~~ the Small County Outreach Program. The purpose of
1800 this program is to assist small county governments in repairing
1801 or rehabilitating county bridges, paving unpaved roads,
1802 addressing road-related drainage improvements, resurfacing or
1803 reconstructing county roads, or constructing capacity or safety
1804 improvements to county roads.

1805 (2) For the purposes of this section, the term "small
1806 county" means any county that has a population of 200,000 or
1807 less as determined by the most recent official population census
1808 determination estimate pursuant to s. 186.901.

1809 ~~(3) Funds allocated under this program, pursuant to s. 4,~~



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1810 ~~ch. 2000-257, Laws of Florida, are in addition to any funds~~
1811 ~~provided pursuant to s. 339.2816, for the Small County Road~~
1812 ~~Assistance Program.~~

1813 (5)~~(6)~~ Funds paid into the State Transportation Trust Fund
1814 pursuant to ss. 201.15, 320.072, and 339.0801 ~~s. 201.15~~ for the
1815 purposes of the Small County Outreach Program are hereby
1816 annually appropriated for expenditure to support the Small
1817 County Outreach Program.

1818 (6)~~(7)~~ Subject to a specific appropriation in addition to
1819 funds annually appropriated for projects under this section, a
1820 municipality within a rural area of opportunity or a rural area
1821 of opportunity community designated under s. 288.0656(7)(a) may
1822 compete for the additional project funding using the criteria
1823 listed in subsection (3) ~~(4)~~ at up to 100 percent of project
1824 costs, excluding capacity improvement projects.

1825 ~~(8) Subject to a specific appropriation in addition to~~
1826 ~~funds appropriated for projects under this section, a local~~
1827 ~~government either wholly or partially within the Everglades~~
1828 ~~Agricultural Area as defined in s. 373.4592(15), the Peace River~~
1829 ~~Basin, or the Suwannee River Basin may compete for additional~~
1830 ~~funding using the criteria listed in paragraph (4)(c) at up to~~
1831 ~~100 percent of project costs on state or county roads used~~
1832 ~~primarily as farm-to-market connections between rural~~
1833 ~~agricultural areas and market distribution centers, excluding~~
1834 ~~capacity improvement projects.~~

1835 Section 35. Section 339.68, Florida Statutes, is amended to
1836 read:

1837 (Substantial rewording of section.
1838 See s. 339.68, F.S., for present text.)



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1839 339.68 Florida Arterial Road Modernization Program.—

1840 (1) The Legislature finds that increasing demands continue
1841 to be placed on rural arterial roads in this state by a fast-
1842 growing economy, continued population growth, and increased
1843 tourism. Investment in the rural arterial roads of this state is
1844 needed to maintain the safety, mobility, reliability, and
1845 resiliency of the transportation system in order to support the
1846 movement of people, goods, and commodities; to enhance economic
1847 prosperity and competitiveness; and to enrich the quality of
1848 life of the rural communities and the environment of this state.

1849 (2) The Florida Arterial Road Modernization Program is
1850 created within the department to make capacity and safety
1851 improvements to two-lane arterial roads or connect existing
1852 arterial roads located in rural communities. For purposes of
1853 this section, the term "rural community" has the same meaning as
1854 provided in s. 288.0656.

1855 (3) Beginning in the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the department
1856 shall allocate from the State Transportation Trust Fund a
1857 minimum of \$50 million in each fiscal year for purposes of
1858 funding the program. This funding is in addition to any other
1859 funding provided to the program by any other law.

1860 (4) The department shall use the following criteria to
1861 prioritize projects for funding under the program:

1862 (a) Whether the road has documented safety concerns or
1863 requires additional safety and design improvements. This may be
1864 evidenced by the number of fatalities or crashes per vehicle
1865 mile traveled.

1866 (b) Whether the road has or is projected to have a
1867 significant amount of truck tractor traffic as determined by the



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1868 department. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "truck
1869 tractor" has the same meaning as in s. 320.01(11).

1870 (c) Whether the road is used to transport agricultural
1871 products and commodities from the farm to the market or other
1872 sale or distribution point.

1873 (d) Whether the road is used to transport goods to or from
1874 warehouses, distribution centers, or intermodal logistics
1875 centers as defined in s. 311.101(2).

1876 (e) Whether the road is used as an evacuation route.

1877 (f) Whether the physical condition of the road meets
1878 department standards.

1879 (g) Whether the road currently has, or is projected to have
1880 within the next 5 years, a level of service of D, E, or F.

1881 (h) Any other criteria related to the impact of a project
1882 on the public road system or on the state or local economy as
1883 determined by the department.

1884 (5) By January 1, 2027, and every 2 years thereafter, the
1885 department shall submit to the Governor, the President of the
1886 Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives a report
1887 regarding the use and condition of arterial roads located in
1888 rural communities, which report must include the following:

1889 (a) A map of roads located in rural communities which are
1890 designated as arterial roads.

1891 (b) A needs assessment that must include, but is not
1892 limited to, consideration of infrastructure improvements to
1893 improve capacity on arterial roads in rural communities.

1894 (c) A synopsis of the department's project prioritization
1895 process.

1896 (d) An estimate of the local and state economic impact of



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1897 improving capacity on arterial roads in rural communities.

1898 (e) A listing of the arterial roads and the associated
1899 improvements to be included in the program and a schedule or
1900 timeline for the inclusion of such projects in the work program.

1901 Section 36. (1) The Department of Transportation shall
1902 allocate the additional funds provided by this act to implement
1903 the Small County Road Assistance Program as created by s.
1904 339.2816, Florida Statutes, and amend the current tentative work
1905 program for the 2025-2026 through 2031-2032 fiscal years to
1906 include additional projects. In addition, before adoption of the
1907 work program, the department shall submit a budget amendment
1908 pursuant to s. 339.135(7), Florida Statutes, requesting budget
1909 authority necessary to implement the additional projects.

1910 (2) The department shall allocate sufficient funds to
1911 implement the Florida Arterial Road Modernization Program,
1912 develop a plan to expend the revenues as specified in s. 339.68,
1913 Florida Statutes, and, before its adoption, amend the current
1914 tentative work program for the 2025-2026 through 2031-2032
1915 fiscal years to include the program's projects. In addition,
1916 before adoption of the work program, the department shall submit
1917 a budget amendment pursuant to s. 339.135(7), Florida Statutes,
1918 requesting budget authority necessary to implement the program
1919 as specified in s. 339.68, Florida Statutes.

1920 (3) Notwithstanding any other law, the increase in revenue
1921 to the State Transportation Trust Fund derived from the
1922 amendments to ss. 201.15 and 319.32, Florida Statutes, made by
1923 this act and deposited into the trust fund pursuant to ss.
1924 201.15 and 339.0801, Florida Statutes, shall be used by the
1925 department to fund the programs as specified in this section.



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1926 Section 37. Subsections (1) and (6) of section 341.052,
1927 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1928 341.052 Public transit block grant program; administration;
1929 eligible projects; limitation.—

1930 (1) There is created a public transit block grant program
1931 which shall be administered by the department. Block grant funds
1932 shall only be provided to ~~“Section 9” providers and “Section 18”~~
1933 providers designated by the United States Department of
1934 Transportation pursuant to 49 U.S.C. s. 5307 and community
1935 transportation coordinators as defined in chapter 427. Eligible
1936 providers must establish public transportation development plans
1937 consistent, to the maximum extent feasible, with approved local
1938 government comprehensive plans of the units of local government
1939 in which the provider is located and the long-range
1940 transportation plans of the metropolitan planning organization
1941 in which the provider is located. In developing public
1942 transportation development plans, eligible providers must
1943 solicit comments from local workforce development boards
1944 established under chapter 445. The development plans must
1945 address how the public transit provider will work with the
1946 appropriate local workforce development board to provide
1947 services to participants in the welfare transition program.
1948 Eligible providers must provide information to the local
1949 workforce development board serving the county in which the
1950 provider is located regarding the availability of transportation
1951 services to assist program participants.

1952 (6) The department shall distribute 85 percent of the
1953 public transit block grant funds to ~~“Section 9” and “Section 18”~~
1954 providers designated by the United States Department of



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1955 Transportation pursuant to 49 U.S.C. s. 5307. The funds shall be
1956 distributed to such ~~"Section 9"~~ providers, and to ~~"Section 18"~~
1957 providers that are not designated as community transportation
1958 coordinators pursuant to chapter 427, according to the following
1959 formula, except that at least \$20,000 shall be distributed to
1960 each eligible provider if application of the formula provides
1961 less than that amount for any such provider:

1962 (a) One-third shall be distributed according to the
1963 percentage that an eligible provider's county population in the
1964 most recent year for which those population figures are
1965 available from the state census repository is of the total
1966 population of all counties served by eligible providers.

1967 (b) One-third shall be distributed according to the
1968 percentage that the total revenue miles provided by an eligible
1969 provider, as verified by the most recent National Transit
1970 Database ~~"Section 15"~~ report to the Federal Transit
1971 Administration or a similar audited report submitted to the
1972 department, is of the total revenue miles provided by eligible
1973 providers in the state in that year.

1974 (c) One-third shall be distributed according to the
1975 percentage that the total passengers carried by an eligible
1976 provider, as verified by the most recent National Transit
1977 Database ~~"Section 15"~~ report submitted to the Federal Transit
1978 Administration or a similar audited report submitted to the
1979 department, is of the total number of passengers carried by
1980 eligible providers in the state in that year.

1981 Section 38. Section 341.0525, Florida Statutes, is created
1982 to read:

1983 341.0525 Rural transit operating block grant program;



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1984 administration; eligible projects.-

1985 (1) There is created a rural transit operating block grant
1986 program that shall be administered by the department. Rural
1987 transit block grant funds are available only to public transit
1988 providers not eligible to receive public transit block grants
1989 pursuant to s. 341.052.

1990 (2) At least \$3 million must be allocated annually from the
1991 State Transportation Trust Fund for the program. At least
1992 \$20,000 must be distributed to each eligible provider if
1993 application of the following formula provides less than that
1994 amount for any such provider:

1995 (a) One-third must be distributed according to the
1996 percentage that an eligible provider's non-urbanized county
1997 population in the most recent year official population estimate
1998 pursuant to s. 186.901 is of the total population of all
1999 counties served by eligible providers.

2000 (b) One-third must be distributed according to the
2001 percentage that the total non-urbanized revenue miles provided
2002 by an eligible provider, as verified by the most recent National
2003 Transit Database report or a similar audited report submitted to
2004 the department, is of the total rural revenue miles provided by
2005 eligible providers in the state in that year.

2006 (c) One-third must be distributed according to the
2007 percentage that the total non-urbanized passengers carried by an
2008 eligible provider, as verified by the most recent National
2009 Transit Database report or a similar audited report submitted to
2010 the department, is of the total number of passengers carried by
2011 eligible providers in the state in that year.

2012 (3) Grant funds must be used to pay public transit



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2013 operating costs. State participation in such costs may not
2014 exceed 50 percent of such costs or an amount equal to the total
2015 revenue, excluding farebox, charter, and advertising revenue and
2016 federal funds, received by the provider for operating costs,
2017 whichever amount is less.

2018 (4) (a) An eligible public transit provider may not use
2019 block grant funds to supplant local tax revenues made available
2020 to such provider for operations in the previous year; however,
2021 the Secretary of Transportation may waive this provision for
2022 public transit providers located in a county recovering from a
2023 state of emergency declared pursuant to part I of chapter 252.

2024 (b) The state may not give any county more than 39 percent
2025 of the funds available for distribution under this section or
2026 more than the amount that local revenue sources provide to that
2027 county for its transit system.

2028 (5) To remain eligible to receive funding under the
2029 program, eligible public transit providers must comply with s.
2030 341.071(1) and (2).

2031 (6) (a) Any funds distributed to an eligible provider
2032 pursuant to subsection (2) which cannot be expended within the
2033 limitations of the program must be returned to the department
2034 for redistribution to other eligible providers.

2035 (b) The department may consult with an eligible provider,
2036 before distributing funds to that provider, to determine whether
2037 the provider can expend its total block grant within the
2038 limitations of the program. If the department and the provider
2039 agree that the total block grant amount cannot be expended, the
2040 provider may agree to accept a block grant amount of less than
2041 the total amount, in which case the funds that exceed such



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2042 lesser agreed-upon amount must be redistributed to other
2043 eligible providers.

2044 (c) If an audit reveals that an eligible provider expended
2045 block grant funds on unauthorized uses, the provider must repay
2046 to the department an amount equal to the funds expended for
2047 unauthorized uses. The department shall redistribute such
2048 repayments to other eligible providers.

2049 Section 39. Subsection (3) of section 420.9073, Florida
2050 Statutes, is amended to read:

2051 420.9073 Local housing distributions.—

2052 (3) Calculation of guaranteed amounts:

2053 (a) The guaranteed amount under subsection (1) shall be
2054 calculated for each state fiscal year by multiplying \$1 million
2055 ~~\$350,000~~ by a fraction, the numerator of which is the amount of
2056 funds distributed to the Local Government Housing Trust Fund
2057 pursuant to s. 201.15(4)(c) and the denominator of which is the
2058 total amount of funds distributed to the Local Government
2059 Housing Trust Fund pursuant to s. 201.15.

2060 (b) The guaranteed amount under subsection (2) shall be
2061 calculated for each state fiscal year by multiplying \$1 million
2062 ~~\$350,000~~ by a fraction, the numerator of which is the amount of
2063 funds distributed to the Local Government Housing Trust Fund
2064 pursuant to s. 201.15(4)(d) and the denominator of which is the
2065 total amount of funds distributed to the Local Government
2066 Housing Trust Fund pursuant to s. 201.15.

2067 Section 40. Paragraph (n) of subsection (5) of section
2068 420.9075, Florida Statutes, is amended, paragraph (o) is added
2069 to that subsection, and paragraph (b) of subsection (13) of that
2070 section is reenacted, to read:



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2071 420.9075 Local housing assistance plans; partnerships.-
2072 (5) The following criteria apply to awards made to eligible
2073 sponsors or eligible persons for the purpose of providing
2074 eligible housing:
2075 (n) Funds from the local housing distribution not used to
2076 meet the criteria established in paragraph (a), ~~or~~ paragraph
2077 (c), or paragraph (o), or not used for the administration of a
2078 local housing assistance plan must be used for housing
2079 production and finance activities, including, but not limited
2080 to, financing preconstruction activities or the purchase of
2081 existing units, providing rental housing, and providing home
2082 ownership training to prospective home buyers and owners of
2083 homes assisted through the local housing assistance plan.
2084 1. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraphs (a) and
2085 (c), program income as defined in s. 420.9071(26) may also be
2086 used to fund activities described in this paragraph.
2087 2. When preconstruction due-diligence activities conducted
2088 as part of a preservation strategy show that preservation of the
2089 units is not feasible and will not result in the production of
2090 an eligible unit, such costs shall be deemed a program expense
2091 rather than an administrative expense if such program expenses
2092 do not exceed 3 percent of the annual local housing
2093 distribution.
2094 3. If both an award under the local housing assistance plan
2095 and federal low-income housing tax credits are used to assist a
2096 project and there is a conflict between the criteria prescribed
2097 in this subsection and the requirements of s. 42 of the Internal
2098 Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, the county or eligible
2099 municipality may resolve the conflict by giving precedence to



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2100 the requirements of s. 42 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986,
2101 as amended, in lieu of following the criteria prescribed in this
2102 subsection with the exception of paragraphs (a) and (g) of this
2103 subsection.

2104 4. Each county and each eligible municipality may award
2105 funds as a grant for construction, rehabilitation, or repair as
2106 part of disaster recovery or emergency repairs or to remedy
2107 accessibility or health and safety deficiencies. Any other
2108 grants must be approved as part of the local housing assistance
2109 plan.

2110 (o) Notwithstanding paragraphs (a) and (c), up to 25
2111 percent of the funds made available in each county and eligible
2112 municipality from the local housing distribution may be used to
2113 preserve multifamily affordable rental housing funded through
2114 United States Department of Agriculture loans. These funds may
2115 be used to rehabilitate housing, extend affordability periods,
2116 or acquire or transfer properties in partnership with private
2117 organizations. This paragraph expires on June 30, 2031.

2118 (13)

2119 (b) If, as a result of its review of the annual report, the
2120 corporation determines that a county or eligible municipality
2121 has failed to implement a local housing incentive strategy, or,
2122 if applicable, a local housing incentive plan, it shall send a
2123 notice of termination of the local government's share of the
2124 local housing distribution by certified mail to the affected
2125 county or eligible municipality.

2126 1. The notice must specify a date of termination of the
2127 funding if the affected county or eligible municipality does not
2128 implement the plan or strategy and provide for a local response.



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2129 A county or eligible municipality shall respond to the
2130 corporation within 30 days after receipt of the notice of
2131 termination.

2132 2. The corporation shall consider the local response that
2133 extenuating circumstances precluded implementation and grant an
2134 extension to the timeframe for implementation. Such an extension
2135 shall be made in the form of an extension agreement that
2136 provides a timeframe for implementation. The chief elected
2137 official of a county or eligible municipality or his or her
2138 designee shall have the authority to enter into the agreement on
2139 behalf of the local government.

2140 3. If the county or the eligible municipality has not
2141 implemented the incentive strategy or entered into an extension
2142 agreement by the termination date specified in the notice, the
2143 local housing distribution share terminates, and any uncommitted
2144 local housing distribution funds held by the affected county or
2145 eligible municipality in its local housing assistance trust fund
2146 shall be transferred to the Local Government Housing Trust Fund
2147 to the credit of the corporation to administer.

2148 4.a. If the affected local government fails to meet the
2149 timeframes specified in the agreement, the corporation shall
2150 terminate funds. The corporation shall send a notice of
2151 termination of the local government's share of the local housing
2152 distribution by certified mail to the affected local government.
2153 The notice shall specify the termination date, and any
2154 uncommitted funds held by the affected local government shall be
2155 transferred to the Local Government Housing Trust Fund to the
2156 credit of the corporation to administer.

2157 b. If the corporation terminates funds to a county, but an



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2158 eligible municipality receiving a local housing distribution
2159 pursuant to an interlocal agreement maintains compliance with
2160 program requirements, the corporation shall thereafter
2161 distribute directly to the participating eligible municipality
2162 its share calculated in the manner provided in ss. 420.9072 and
2163 420.9073.

2164 c. Any county or eligible municipality whose local
2165 distribution share has been terminated may subsequently elect to
2166 receive directly its local distribution share by adopting the
2167 ordinance, resolution, and local housing assistance plan in the
2168 manner and according to the procedures provided in ss. 420.907-
2169 420.9079.

2170 Section 41. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the sum of \$1
2171 million in recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund is
2172 appropriated to the Florida Small Business Development Center
2173 Network under s. 288.001, Florida Statutes, to expand services
2174 in rural communities. The funds shall be allocated to the Office
2175 of Rural Prosperity budget entity within the Department of
2176 Commerce in the Special Categories-SBDCN Rural Services specific
2177 appropriation category.

2178 Section 42. (1) For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the sums of
2179 \$1,827,591 in recurring funds and \$652,327 in nonrecurring funds
2180 are appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Department
2181 of Commerce.

2182 (2) The recurring general revenue funds shall be allocated
2183 to the Office of Rural Prosperity budget entity in the following
2184 specific appropriations categories: \$1,585,823 in Salaries and
2185 Benefits, \$175,961 in Expenses, \$50,000 in Contracted Services,
2186 \$10,000 in Operating Capital Outlay, and \$5,807 in Transfer to



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2187 the Department of Management Services/Statewide Human Resources
2188 Contract.

2189 (3) The nonrecurring general revenue funds shall be
2190 allocated to the Office of Rural Prosperity budget entity in the
2191 following specific appropriations categories: \$92,327 in
2192 Expenses and \$560,000 in Acquisition of Motor Vehicles.

2193 (4) The Department of Commerce is authorized to establish
2194 17.00 full-time equivalent positions with associated salary rate
2195 of 1,060,000 in the Office of Rural Prosperity for the purpose
2196 of implementing this act. The following specific positions,
2197 classifications, and pay plans are authorized: 1.00 Director of
2198 General Operation, Class Code 9327, Pay Grade 940; 15.00
2199 Government Analyst II, Class Code 2225, Pay Grade 026; and 1.00
2200 Administrative Assistant II, Class Code 0712, Pay Grade 018.

2201 Section 43. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the recurring
2202 sum of \$8 million from the General Revenue Fund is appropriated
2203 to the Office of Rural Prosperity within the Department of
2204 Commerce to implement the Renaissance Grants Program created by
2205 s. 288.014, Florida Statutes. No funds may be used by the state
2206 for administrative costs.

2207 Section 44. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the recurring
2208 sum of \$500,000 from the Grants and Donations Trust Fund within
2209 the Department of Commerce is appropriated to the Office of
2210 Rural Prosperity within the Department of Commerce to implement
2211 the Public Infrastructure Smart Technology Grant Program created
2212 by s. 288.0175, Florida Statutes.

2213 Section 45. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the sums of \$4
2214 million in nonrecurring funds and \$1 million in recurring funds
2215 from the General Revenue Fund are appropriated to the Office of



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2216 Rural Prosperity within the Department of Commerce to implement
2217 the Rural Community Development Revolving Loan Fund under s.
2218 288.065, Florida Statutes, as amended by this act.

2219 Section 46. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the sums of \$40
2220 million in nonrecurring funds and \$5 million in recurring funds
2221 from the General Revenue Fund are appropriated to the Office of
2222 Rural Prosperity within the Department of Commerce to implement
2223 the Rural Infrastructure Fund under s. 288.0655, Florida
2224 Statutes, as amended by this act.

2225 Section 47. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the sum of
2226 \$250,000 in recurring funds from the Grants and Donations Trust
2227 Fund within the Department of Commerce is appropriated to the
2228 Office of Rural Prosperity within the Department of Commerce to
2229 implement s. 288.0657, Florida Statutes, as amended by this act.

2230 Section 48. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the sum of \$30
2231 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund is
2232 appropriated to the Florida Housing Finance Corporation to be
2233 used to preserve affordable multifamily rental housing in rural
2234 communities funded through United States Department of
2235 Agriculture loans. The funds provided in this appropriation
2236 shall be used to issue competitive requests for application for
2237 the rehabilitation or acquisition of such properties to ensure
2238 continued affordability. By October 1, 2026, the Florida Housing
2239 Finance Corporation shall submit a report to the President of
2240 the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives on
2241 projects funded pursuant to this section, which report must
2242 include the number of units preserved and the financing
2243 portfolio for each project.

2244 Section 49. Subsection (3) of section 163.3187, Florida



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2245 Statutes, is amended to read:

2246 163.3187 Process for adoption of small scale comprehensive
2247 plan amendment.—

2248 (3) If the small scale development amendment involves a
2249 site within a rural area of opportunity as defined under s.
2250 288.0656 ~~s. 288.0656(2)(d)~~ for the duration of such designation,
2251 the acreage limit listed in subsection (1) shall be increased by
2252 100 percent. The local government approving the small scale plan
2253 amendment shall certify to the state land planning agency that
2254 the plan amendment furthers the economic objectives set forth in
2255 the executive order issued under s. 288.0656(7), and the
2256 property subject to the plan amendment shall undergo public
2257 review to ensure that all concurrency requirements and federal,
2258 state, and local environmental permit requirements are met.

2259 Section 50. Section 212.205, Florida Statutes, is amended
2260 to read:

2261 212.205 Sales tax distribution reporting.—By March 15 of
2262 each year, each person who received a distribution pursuant to
2263 s. 212.20(6)(d)7.b. and c. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.b. and c.~~ in the
2264 preceding calendar year shall report to the Office of Economic
2265 and Demographic Research the following information:

2266 (1) An itemized accounting of all expenditures of the funds
2267 distributed in the preceding calendar year, including amounts
2268 spent on debt service.

2269 (2) A statement indicating what portion of the distributed
2270 funds have been pledged for debt service.

2271 (3) The original principal amount and current debt service
2272 schedule of any bonds or other borrowing for which the
2273 distributed funds have been pledged for debt service.



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2274 Section 51. Section 257.191, Florida Statutes, is amended
2275 to read:

2276 257.191 Construction grants.—The Division of Library and
2277 Information Services may accept and administer library
2278 construction moneys appropriated to it and shall allocate such
2279 appropriation to municipal, county, and regional libraries in
2280 the form of library construction grants on a matching basis. The
2281 local matching portion shall be no less than the grant amount,
2282 on a dollar-for-dollar basis, up to the maximum grant amount,
2283 unless the matching requirement is waived pursuant to s. 288.019
2284 ~~by s. 288.06561~~. Initiation of a library construction project 12
2285 months or less prior to the grant award under this section does
2286 ~~shall~~ not affect the eligibility of an applicant to receive a
2287 library construction grant. The division shall adopt rules for
2288 the administration of library construction grants. For the
2289 purposes of this section, s. 257.21 does not apply.

2290 Section 52. Subsection (2) of section 257.193, Florida
2291 Statutes, is amended to read:

2292 257.193 Community Libraries in Caring Program.—

2293 (2) The purpose of the Community Libraries in Caring
2294 Program is to assist libraries in rural communities, as defined
2295 in s. 288.0656(2) and subject to the provisions of s. 288.019 ~~s.~~
2296 ~~288.06561~~, to strengthen their collections and services, improve
2297 literacy in their communities, and improve the economic
2298 viability of their communities.

2299 Section 53. Subsection (17) of section 265.283, Florida
2300 Statutes, is amended to read:

2301 265.283 Definitions.—The following definitions shall apply
2302 to ss. 265.281-265.703:



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2303 (17) "Underserved arts community assistance program grants"
2304 means grants used by qualified organizations under the Rural
2305 Economic Development Initiative, pursuant to s. 288.0656 and
2306 subject to the provisions of s. 288.019 ~~ss. 288.0656 and~~
2307 ~~288.0656~~, for the purpose of economic and organizational
2308 development for underserved cultural organizations.

2309 Section 54. Paragraphs (a) and (d) of subsection (3) of
2310 section 288.11621, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

2311 288.11621 Spring training baseball franchises.—

2312 (3) USE OF FUNDS.—

2313 (a) A certified applicant may use funds provided under s.
2314 212.20(6)(d)7.b. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.b.~~ only to:

2315 1. Serve the public purpose of acquiring, constructing,
2316 reconstructing, or renovating a facility for a spring training
2317 franchise.

2318 2. Pay or pledge for the payment of debt service on, or to
2319 fund debt service reserve funds, arbitrage rebate obligations,
2320 or other amounts payable with respect thereto, bonds issued for
2321 the acquisition, construction, reconstruction, or renovation of
2322 such facility, or for the reimbursement of such costs or the
2323 refinancing of bonds issued for such purposes.

2324 3. Assist in the relocation of a spring training franchise
2325 from one unit of local government to another only if the
2326 governing board of the current host local government by a
2327 majority vote agrees to relocation.

2328 (d)1. All certified applicants must place unexpended state
2329 funds received pursuant to s. 212.20(6)(d)7.b. ~~s.~~
2330 ~~212.20(6)(d)6.b.~~ in a trust fund or separate account for use
2331 only as authorized in this section.



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2332 2. A certified applicant may request that the Department of
2333 Revenue suspend further distributions of state funds made
2334 available under s. 212.20(6)(d)7.b. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.b.~~ for 12
2335 months after expiration of an existing agreement with a spring
2336 training franchise to provide the certified applicant with an
2337 opportunity to enter into a new agreement with a spring training
2338 franchise, at which time the distributions shall resume.

2339 3. The expenditure of state funds distributed to an
2340 applicant certified before July 1, 2010, must begin within 48
2341 months after the initial receipt of the state funds. In
2342 addition, the construction of, or capital improvements to, a
2343 spring training facility must be completed within 24 months
2344 after the project's commencement.

2345 Section 55. Paragraph (c) of subsection (2) and paragraphs
2346 (a), (c), and (d) of subsection (3) of section 288.11631,
2347 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

2348 288.11631 Retention of Major League Baseball spring
2349 training baseball franchises.—

2350 (2) CERTIFICATION PROCESS.—

2351 (c) Each applicant certified on or after July 1, 2013,
2352 shall enter into an agreement with the department which:

2353 1. Specifies the amount of the state incentive funding to
2354 be distributed. The amount of state incentive funding per
2355 certified applicant may not exceed \$20 million. However, if a
2356 certified applicant's facility is used by more than one spring
2357 training franchise, the maximum amount may not exceed \$50
2358 million, and the Department of Revenue shall make distributions
2359 to the applicant pursuant to s. 212.20(6)(d)7.c. ~~s.~~
2360 ~~212.20(6)(d)6.c.~~



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2361 2. States the criteria that the certified applicant must
2362 meet in order to remain certified. These criteria must include a
2363 provision stating that the spring training franchise must
2364 reimburse the state for any funds received if the franchise does
2365 not comply with the terms of the contract. If bonds were issued
2366 to construct or renovate a facility for a spring training
2367 franchise, the required reimbursement must be equal to the total
2368 amount of state distributions expected to be paid from the date
2369 the franchise violates the agreement with the applicant through
2370 the final maturity of the bonds.

2371 3. States that the certified applicant is subject to
2372 decertification if the certified applicant fails to comply with
2373 this section or the agreement.

2374 4. States that the department may recover state incentive
2375 funds if the certified applicant is decertified.

2376 5. Specifies the information that the certified applicant
2377 must report to the department.

2378 6. Includes any provision deemed prudent by the department.

2379 (3) USE OF FUNDS.—

2380 (a) A certified applicant may use funds provided under s.
2381 212.20(6)(d)7.c. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.e.~~ only to:

2382 1. Serve the public purpose of constructing or renovating a
2383 facility for a spring training franchise.

2384 2. Pay or pledge for the payment of debt service on, or to
2385 fund debt service reserve funds, arbitrage rebate obligations,
2386 or other amounts payable with respect thereto, bonds issued for
2387 the construction or renovation of such facility, or for the
2388 reimbursement of such costs or the refinancing of bonds issued
2389 for such purposes.



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2390 (c) The Department of Revenue may not distribute funds
2391 under s. 212.20(6)(d)7.c. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.e.~~ until July 1,
2392 2016. Further, the Department of Revenue may not distribute
2393 funds to an applicant certified on or after July 1, 2013, until
2394 it receives notice from the department that:

2395 1. The certified applicant has encumbered funds under
2396 either subparagraph (a)1. or subparagraph (a)2.; and

2397 2. If applicable, any existing agreement with a spring
2398 training franchise for the use of a facility has expired.

2399 (d)1. All certified applicants shall place unexpended state
2400 funds received pursuant to s. 212.20(6)(d)7.c. ~~s.~~
2401 ~~212.20(6)(d)6.e.~~ in a trust fund or separate account for use
2402 only as authorized in this section.

2403 2. A certified applicant may request that the department
2404 notify the Department of Revenue to suspend further
2405 distributions of state funds made available under s.
2406 212.20(6)(d)7.c. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.e.~~ for 12 months after
2407 expiration of an existing agreement with a spring training
2408 franchise to provide the certified applicant with an opportunity
2409 to enter into a new agreement with a spring training franchise,
2410 at which time the distributions shall resume.

2411 3. The expenditure of state funds distributed to an
2412 applicant certified after July 1, 2013, must begin within 48
2413 months after the initial receipt of the state funds. In
2414 addition, the construction or renovation of a spring training
2415 facility must be completed within 24 months after the project's
2416 commencement.

2417 Section 56. Subsection (1) of section 443.191, Florida
2418 Statutes, is amended to read:



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2419 443.191 Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund; establishment
2420 and control.—

2421 (1) There is established, as a separate trust fund apart
2422 from all other public funds of this state, an Unemployment
2423 Compensation Trust Fund, which shall be administered by the
2424 Department of Commerce exclusively for the purposes of this
2425 chapter. The fund must consist of:

2426 (a) All contributions and reimbursements collected under
2427 this chapter;

2428 (b) Interest earned on any moneys in the fund;

2429 (c) Any property or securities acquired through the use of
2430 moneys belonging to the fund;

2431 (d) All earnings of these properties or securities;

2432 (e) All money credited to this state's account in the
2433 federal Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund under 42 U.S.C. s.
2434 1103;

2435 (f) All money collected for penalties imposed pursuant to
2436 s. 443.151(6) (a);

2437 (g) Advances on the amount in the federal Unemployment
2438 Compensation Trust Fund credited to the state under 42 U.S.C. s.
2439 1321, as requested by the Governor or the Governor's designee;
2440 and

2441 (h) All money deposited in this account as a distribution
2442 pursuant to s. 212.20(6)(d)7.e. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.e.~~

2443
2444 Except as otherwise provided in s. 443.1313(4), all moneys in
2445 the fund must be mingled and undivided.

2446 Section 57. Section 571.26, Florida Statutes, is amended to
2447 read:



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2448 571.26 Florida Agricultural Promotional Campaign Trust
2449 Fund.—There is hereby created the Florida Agricultural
2450 Promotional Campaign Trust Fund within the Department of
2451 Agriculture and Consumer Services to receive all moneys related
2452 to the Florida Agricultural Promotional Campaign. Moneys
2453 deposited in the trust fund shall be appropriated for the sole
2454 purpose of implementing the Florida Agricultural Promotional
2455 Campaign, except for money deposited in the trust fund pursuant
2456 to s. 212.20 (6) (d) 7.h. ~~s. 212.20 (6) (d) 6.h.~~, which shall be held
2457 separately and used solely for the purposes identified in s.
2458 571.265.

2459 Section 58. Subsection (2) of section 571.265, Florida
2460 Statutes, is amended to read:

2461 571.265 Promotion of Florida thoroughbred breeding and of
2462 thoroughbred racing at Florida thoroughbred tracks; distribution
2463 of funds.—

2464 (2) Funds deposited into the Florida Agricultural
2465 Promotional Campaign Trust Fund pursuant to s. 212.20 (6) (d) 7.f.
2466 ~~s. 212.20 (6) (d) 6.f.~~ shall be used by the department to encourage
2467 the agricultural activity of breeding thoroughbred racehorses in
2468 this state and to enhance thoroughbred racing conducted at
2469 thoroughbred tracks in this state as provided in this section.
2470 If the funds made available under this section are not fully
2471 used in any one fiscal year, any unused amounts shall be carried
2472 forward in the trust fund into future fiscal years and made
2473 available for distribution as provided in this section.

2474 Section 59. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
2475 made by this act to section 20.60, Florida Statutes, in a
2476 reference thereto, subsection (8) of section 288.9935, Florida



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2477 Statutes, is reenacted to read:

2478 288.9935 Microfinance Guarantee Program.—

2479 (8) The department must, in the department's report
2480 required under s. 20.60(10), include an annual report on the
2481 program. The report must, at a minimum, provide:

2482 (a) A comprehensive description of the program, including
2483 an evaluation of its application and guarantee activities,
2484 recommendations for change, and identification of any other
2485 state programs that overlap with the program;

2486 (b) An assessment of the current availability of and access
2487 to credit for entrepreneurs and small businesses in this state;

2488 (c) A summary of the financial and employment results of
2489 the entrepreneurs and small businesses receiving loan
2490 guarantees, including the number of full-time equivalent jobs
2491 created as a result of the guaranteed loans and the amount of
2492 wages paid to employees in the newly created jobs;

2493 (d) Industry data about the borrowers, including the six-
2494 digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)
2495 code;

2496 (e) The name and location of lenders that receive loan
2497 guarantees;

2498 (f) The number of loan guarantee applications received;

2499 (g) The number, duration, location, and amount of
2500 guarantees made;

2501 (h) The number and amount of guaranteed loans outstanding,
2502 if any;

2503 (i) The number and amount of guaranteed loans with payments
2504 overdue, if any;

2505 (j) The number and amount of guaranteed loans in default,



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2506 if any;

2507 (k) The repayment history of the guaranteed loans made; and

2508 (l) An evaluation of the program's ability to meet the

2509 financial performance measures and objectives specified in

2510 subsection (3).

2511 Section 60. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment

2512 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a

2513 reference thereto, paragraph (c) of subsection (5) of section

2514 125.0104, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

2515 125.0104 Tourist development tax; procedure for levying;

2516 authorized uses; referendum; enforcement.—

2517 (5) AUTHORIZED USES OF REVENUE.—

2518 (c) A county located adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico or the

2519 Atlantic Ocean, except a county that receives revenue from taxes

2520 levied pursuant to s. 125.0108, which meets the following

2521 criteria may use up to 10 percent of the tax revenue received

2522 pursuant to this section to reimburse expenses incurred in

2523 providing public safety services, including emergency medical

2524 services as defined in s. 401.107(3), and law enforcement

2525 services, which are needed to address impacts related to

2526 increased tourism and visitors to an area. However, if taxes

2527 collected pursuant to this section are used to reimburse

2528 emergency medical services or public safety services for tourism

2529 or special events, the governing board of a county or

2530 municipality may not use such taxes to supplant the normal

2531 operating expenses of an emergency medical services department,

2532 a fire department, a sheriff's office, or a police department.

2533 To receive reimbursement, the county must:

2534 1.a. Generate a minimum of \$10 million in annual proceeds



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2535 from any tax, or any combination of taxes, authorized to be
2536 levied pursuant to this section;

2537 b. Have at least three municipalities; and

2538 c. Have an estimated population of less than 275,000,
2539 according to the most recent population estimate prepared
2540 pursuant to s. 186.901, excluding the inmate population; or

2541 2. Be a fiscally constrained county as described in s.
2542 218.67(1).

2543

2544 The board of county commissioners must by majority vote approve
2545 reimbursement made pursuant to this paragraph upon receipt of a
2546 recommendation from the tourist development council.

2547 Section 61. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
2548 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a
2549 reference thereto, subsection (3) of section 193.624, Florida
2550 Statutes, is reenacted to read:

2551 193.624 Assessment of renewable energy source devices.—

2552 (3) This section applies to the installation of a renewable
2553 energy source device installed on or after January 1, 2013, to
2554 new and existing residential real property. This section applies
2555 to a renewable energy source device installed on or after
2556 January 1, 2018, to all other real property, except when
2557 installed as part of a project planned for a location in a
2558 fiscally constrained county, as defined in s. 218.67(1), and for
2559 which an application for a comprehensive plan amendment or
2560 planned unit development zoning has been filed with the county
2561 on or before December 31, 2017.

2562 Section 62. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
2563 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a



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2564 reference thereto, subsection (2) of section 196.182, Florida
2565 Statutes, is reenacted to read:

2566 196.182 Exemption of renewable energy source devices.—

2567 (2) The exemption provided in this section does not apply
2568 to a renewable energy source device that is installed as part of
2569 a project planned for a location in a fiscally constrained
2570 county, as defined in s. 218.67(1), and for which an application
2571 for a comprehensive plan amendment or planned unit development
2572 zoning has been filed with the county on or before December 31,
2573 2017.

2574 Section 63. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
2575 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a
2576 reference thereto, subsection (1) of section 218.12, Florida
2577 Statutes, is reenacted to read:

2578 218.12 Appropriations to offset reductions in ad valorem
2579 tax revenue in fiscally constrained counties.—

2580 (1) Beginning in fiscal year 2008-2009, the Legislature
2581 shall appropriate moneys to offset the reductions in ad valorem
2582 tax revenue experienced by fiscally constrained counties, as
2583 defined in s. 218.67(1), which occur as a direct result of the
2584 implementation of revisions of Art. VII of the State
2585 Constitution approved in the special election held on January
2586 29, 2008. The moneys appropriated for this purpose shall be
2587 distributed in January of each fiscal year among the fiscally
2588 constrained counties based on each county's proportion of the
2589 total reduction in ad valorem tax revenue resulting from the
2590 implementation of the revision.

2591 Section 64. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
2592 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a



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2593 reference thereto, subsection (1) of section 218.125, Florida
2594 Statutes, is reenacted to read:

2595 218.125 Offset for tax loss associated with certain
2596 constitutional amendments affecting fiscally constrained
2597 counties.-

2598 (1) Beginning in the 2010-2011 fiscal year, the Legislature
2599 shall appropriate moneys to offset the reductions in ad valorem
2600 tax revenue experienced by fiscally constrained counties, as
2601 defined in s. 218.67(1), which occur as a direct result of the
2602 implementation of revisions of ss. 3(f) and 4(b), Art. VII of
2603 the State Constitution which were approved in the general
2604 election held in November 2008. The moneys appropriated for this
2605 purpose shall be distributed in January of each fiscal year
2606 among the fiscally constrained counties based on each county's
2607 proportion of the total reduction in ad valorem tax revenue
2608 resulting from the implementation of the revisions.

2609 Section 65. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
2610 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a
2611 reference thereto, subsection (1) of section 218.135, Florida
2612 Statutes, is reenacted to read:

2613 218.135 Offset for tax loss associated with reductions in
2614 value of certain citrus fruit packing and processing equipment.-

2615 (1) For the 2018-2019 fiscal year, the Legislature shall
2616 appropriate moneys to offset the reductions in ad valorem tax
2617 revenue experienced by fiscally constrained counties, as defined
2618 in s. 218.67(1), which occur as a direct result of the
2619 implementation of s. 193.4516. The moneys appropriated for this
2620 purpose shall be distributed in January 2019 among the fiscally
2621 constrained counties based on each county's proportion of the



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2622 total reduction in ad valorem tax revenue resulting from the
2623 implementation of s. 193.4516.

2624 Section 66. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
2625 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a
2626 reference thereto, subsection (1) of section 218.136, Florida
2627 Statutes, is reenacted to read:

2628 218.136 Offset for ad valorem revenue loss affecting
2629 fiscally constrained counties.—

2630 (1) Beginning in fiscal year 2025-2026, the Legislature
2631 shall appropriate moneys to offset the reductions in ad valorem
2632 tax revenue experienced by fiscally constrained counties, as
2633 defined in s. 218.67(1), which occur as a direct result of the
2634 implementation of revisions of s. 6(a), Art. VII of the State
2635 Constitution approved in the November 2024 general election. The
2636 moneys appropriated for this purpose shall be distributed in
2637 January of each fiscal year among the fiscally constrained
2638 counties based on each county's proportion of the total
2639 reduction in ad valorem tax revenue resulting from the
2640 implementation of the revision of s. 6(a), Art. VII of the State
2641 Constitution.

2642 Section 67. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
2643 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a
2644 reference thereto, paragraph (cc) of subsection (2) of section
2645 252.35, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

2646 252.35 Emergency management powers; Division of Emergency
2647 Management.—

2648 (2) The division is responsible for carrying out the
2649 provisions of ss. 252.31-252.90. In performing its duties, the
2650 division shall:



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2651 (cc) Prioritize technical assistance and training to
2652 fiscally constrained counties as defined in s. 218.67(1) on
2653 aspects of safety measures, preparedness, prevention, response,
2654 recovery, and mitigation relating to natural disasters and
2655 emergencies.

2656 Section 68. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
2657 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a
2658 reference thereto, subsection (4) of section 288.102, Florida
2659 Statutes, is reenacted to read:

2660 288.102 Supply Chain Innovation Grant Program.—

2661 (4) A minimum of a one-to-one match of nonstate resources,
2662 including local, federal, or private funds, to the state
2663 contribution is required. An award may not be made for a project
2664 that is receiving or using state funding from another state
2665 source or statutory program, including tax credits. The one-to-
2666 one match requirement is waived for a public entity located in a
2667 fiscally constrained county as defined in s. 218.67(1).

2668 Section 69. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
2669 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a
2670 reference thereto, paragraph (g) of subsection (16) of section
2671 403.064, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

2672 403.064 Reuse of reclaimed water.—

2673 (16) By November 1, 2021, domestic wastewater utilities
2674 that dispose of effluent, reclaimed water, or reuse water by
2675 surface water discharge shall submit to the department for
2676 review and approval a plan for eliminating nonbeneficial surface
2677 water discharge by January 1, 2032, subject to the requirements
2678 of this section. The plan must include the average gallons per
2679 day of effluent, reclaimed water, or reuse water that will no



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2680 longer be discharged into surface waters and the date of such
2681 elimination, the average gallons per day of surface water
2682 discharge which will continue in accordance with the
2683 alternatives provided for in subparagraphs (a)2. and 3., and the
2684 level of treatment that the effluent, reclaimed water, or reuse
2685 water will receive before being discharged into a surface water
2686 by each alternative.

2687 (g) This subsection does not apply to any of the following:

2688 1. A domestic wastewater treatment facility that is located
2689 in a fiscally constrained county as described in s. 218.67(1).

2690 2. A domestic wastewater treatment facility that is located
2691 in a municipality that is entirely within a rural area of
2692 opportunity as designated pursuant to s. 288.0656.

2693 3. A domestic wastewater treatment facility that is located
2694 in a municipality that has less than \$10 million in total
2695 revenue, as determined by the municipality's most recent annual
2696 financial report submitted to the Department of Financial
2697 Services in accordance with s. 218.32.

2698 4. A domestic wastewater treatment facility that is
2699 operated by an operator of a mobile home park as defined in s.
2700 723.003 and has a permitted capacity of less than 300,000
2701 gallons per day.

2702 Section 70. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
2703 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in
2704 references thereto, subsections (2) and (3) of section 589.08,
2705 Florida Statutes, are reenacted to read:

2706 589.08 Land acquisition restrictions.—

2707 (2) The Florida Forest Service may receive, hold the
2708 custody of, and exercise the control of any lands, and set aside



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2709 into a separate, distinct and inviolable fund, any proceeds
2710 derived from the sales of the products of such lands, the use
2711 thereof in any manner, or the sale of such lands save the 25
2712 percent of the proceeds to be paid into the State School Fund as
2713 provided by law. The Florida Forest Service may use and apply
2714 such funds for the acquisition, use, custody, management,
2715 development, or improvement of any lands vested in or subject to
2716 the control of the Florida Forest Service. After full payment
2717 has been made for the purchase of a state forest to the Federal
2718 Government or other grantor, 15 percent of the gross receipts
2719 from a state forest shall be paid to the fiscally constrained
2720 county or counties, as described in s. 218.67(1), in which it is
2721 located in proportion to the acreage located in each county for
2722 use by the county or counties for school purposes.

2723 (3) The Florida Forest Service shall pay 15 percent of the
2724 gross receipts from the Goethe State Forest to each fiscally
2725 constrained county, as described in s. 218.67(1), in which a
2726 portion of the respective forest is located in proportion to the
2727 forest acreage located in such county. The funds must be equally
2728 divided between the board of county commissioners and the school
2729 board of each fiscally constrained county.

2730 Section 71. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
2731 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a
2732 reference thereto, paragraph (f) of subsection (1) of section
2733 1011.62, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

2734 1011.62 Funds for operation of schools.—If the annual
2735 allocation from the Florida Education Finance Program to each
2736 district for operation of schools is not determined in the
2737 annual appropriations act or the substantive bill implementing



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2738 the annual appropriations act, it shall be determined as
2739 follows:

2740 (1) COMPUTATION OF THE BASIC AMOUNT TO BE INCLUDED FOR
2741 OPERATION.—The following procedure shall be followed in
2742 determining the annual allocation to each district for
2743 operation:

2744 (f) *Small district factor*.—An additional value per full-
2745 time equivalent student membership is provided to each school
2746 district with a full-time equivalent student membership of fewer
2747 than 20,000 full-time equivalent students which is in a fiscally
2748 constrained county as described in s. 218.67(1). The amount of
2749 the additional value shall be specified in the General
2750 Appropriations Act.

2751 Section 72. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
2752 made by this act to sections 218.67 and 339.2818, Florida
2753 Statutes, in references thereto, paragraph (c) of subsection (6)
2754 of section 403.0741, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

2755 403.0741 Grease waste removal and disposal.—

2756 (6) REGULATION BY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS.—

2757 (c) Fiscally constrained counties as described in s.
2758 218.67(1) and small counties as defined in s. 339.2818(2) may
2759 opt out of the requirements of this section.

2760 Section 73. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
2761 made by this act to section 288.0656, Florida Statutes, in a
2762 reference thereto, paragraph (e) of subsection (7) of section
2763 163.3177, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

2764 163.3177 Required and optional elements of comprehensive
2765 plan; studies and surveys.—

2766 (7)



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2767 (e) This subsection does not confer the status of rural
2768 area of opportunity, or any of the rights or benefits derived
2769 from such status, on any land area not otherwise designated as
2770 such pursuant to s. 288.0656(7).

2771 Section 74. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
2772 made by this act to section 288.9961, Florida Statutes, in a
2773 reference thereto, paragraph (a) of subsection (7) of section
2774 288.9962, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

2775 288.9962 Broadband Opportunity Program.—

2776 (7)(a) In evaluating grant applications and awarding
2777 grants, the office must give priority to applications that:

2778 1. Offer broadband Internet service to important community
2779 institutions, including, but not limited to, libraries,
2780 educational institutions, public safety facilities, and health
2781 care facilities;

2782 2. Facilitate the use of telemedicine and electronic health
2783 records;

2784 3. Serve economically distressed areas of this state, as
2785 measured by indices of unemployment, poverty, or population loss
2786 that are significantly greater than the statewide average;

2787 4. Provide for scalability to transmission speeds of at
2788 least 100 megabits per second download and 10 megabits per
2789 second upload;

2790 5. Include a component to actively promote the adoption of
2791 the newly available broadband Internet service in the community;

2792 6. Provide evidence of strong support for the project from
2793 citizens, government, businesses, and institutions in the
2794 community;

2795 7. Provide access to broadband Internet service to the



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2796 greatest number of unserved households and businesses;

2797 8. Leverage greater amounts of funding for a project from
2798 private sources; or

2799 9. Demonstrate consistency with the strategic plan adopted
2800 under s. 288.9961.

2801 Section 75. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
2802 made by this act to section 319.32, Florida Statutes, in a
2803 reference thereto, subsection (1) of section 215.211, Florida
2804 Statutes, is reenacted to read:

2805 215.211 Service charge; elimination or reduction for
2806 specified proceeds.—

2807 (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of s. 215.20(1) and
2808 former s. 215.20(3), the service charge provided in s. 215.20(1)
2809 and former s. 215.20(3), which is deducted from the proceeds of
2810 the taxes distributed under ss. 206.606(1), 207.026,
2811 212.0501(6), and 319.32(5), shall be eliminated beginning July
2812 1, 2000.

2813 Section 76. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
2814 made by this act to section 339.68, Florida Statutes, in
2815 references thereto, subsections (5) and (6) of section 339.66,
2816 Florida Statutes, are reenacted to read:

2817 339.66 Upgrade of arterial highways with controlled access
2818 facilities.—

2819 (5) Any existing applicable requirements relating to
2820 department projects shall apply to projects undertaken by the
2821 department pursuant to this section. The department shall take
2822 into consideration the guidance and recommendations of any
2823 previous studies or reports relevant to the projects authorized
2824 by this section and ss. 339.67 and 339.68, including, but not



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2825 limited to, the task force reports prepared pursuant to chapter
2826 2019-43, Laws of Florida.

2827 (6) Any existing applicable requirements relating to
2828 turnpike projects apply to projects undertaken by the Turnpike
2829 Enterprise pursuant to this section. The Turnpike Enterprise
2830 shall take into consideration the guidance and recommendations
2831 of any previous studies or reports relevant to the projects
2832 authorized by this section and ss. 339.67 and 339.68, including,
2833 but not limited to, the task force reports prepared pursuant to
2834 chapter 2019-43, Laws of Florida, and with respect to any
2835 extension of the Florida Turnpike from its northerly terminus in
2836 Wildwood.

2837 Section 77. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
2838 made by this act to section 420.9073, Florida Statutes, in
2839 references thereto, subsections (4) and (6) of section 420.9072,
2840 Florida Statutes, are reenacted to read:

2841 420.9072 State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program.—The
2842 State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program is created for the
2843 purpose of providing funds to counties and eligible
2844 municipalities as an incentive for the creation of local housing
2845 partnerships, to expand production of and preserve affordable
2846 housing, to further the housing element of the local government
2847 comprehensive plan specific to affordable housing, and to
2848 increase housing-related employment.

2849 (4) Moneys in the Local Government Housing Trust Fund shall
2850 be distributed by the corporation to each approved county and
2851 eligible municipality within the county as provided in s.
2852 420.9073. Distributions shall be allocated to the participating
2853 county and to each eligible municipality within the county



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2854 according to an interlocal agreement between the county
2855 governing authority and the governing body of the eligible
2856 municipality or, if there is no interlocal agreement, according
2857 to population. The portion for each eligible municipality is
2858 computed by multiplying the total moneys earmarked for a county
2859 by a fraction, the numerator of which is the population of the
2860 eligible municipality and the denominator of which is the total
2861 population of the county. The remaining revenues shall be
2862 distributed to the governing body of the county.

2863 (6) The moneys that otherwise would be distributed pursuant
2864 to s. 420.9073 to a local government that does not meet the
2865 program's requirements for receipts of such distributions shall
2866 remain in the Local Government Housing Trust Fund to be
2867 administered by the corporation.

2868 Section 78. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
2869 made by this act to section 420.9073, Florida Statutes, in a
2870 reference thereto, paragraph (b) of subsection (7) of section
2871 420.9076, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

2872 420.9076 Adoption of affordable housing incentive
2873 strategies; committees.—

2874 (7) The governing board of the county or the eligible
2875 municipality shall notify the corporation by certified mail of
2876 its adoption of an amendment of its local housing assistance
2877 plan to incorporate local housing incentive strategies. The
2878 notice must include a copy of the approved amended plan.

2879 (b) If a county fails to timely adopt an amended local
2880 housing assistance plan to incorporate local housing incentive
2881 strategies but an eligible municipality receiving a local
2882 housing distribution pursuant to an interlocal agreement within



2883 the county does timely adopt an amended local housing assistance
2884 plan to incorporate local housing incentive strategies, the
2885 corporation, after issuance of a notice of termination, shall
2886 thereafter distribute directly to the participating eligible
2887 municipality its share calculated in the manner provided in s.
2888 420.9073.

2889 Section 79. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
2890 made by this act to section 420.9073, Florida Statutes, in a
2891 reference thereto, subsection (2) of section 420.9079, Florida
2892 Statutes, is reenacted to read:

2893 420.9079 Local Government Housing Trust Fund.—

2894 (2) The corporation shall administer the fund exclusively
2895 for the purpose of implementing the programs described in ss.
2896 420.907-420.9076 and this section. With the exception of
2897 monitoring the activities of counties and eligible
2898 municipalities to determine local compliance with program
2899 requirements, the corporation shall not receive appropriations
2900 from the fund for administrative or personnel costs. For the
2901 purpose of implementing the compliance monitoring provisions of
2902 s. 420.9075(9), the corporation may request a maximum of one-
2903 quarter of 1 percent of the annual appropriation per state
2904 fiscal year. When such funding is appropriated, the corporation
2905 shall deduct the amount appropriated prior to calculating the
2906 local housing distribution pursuant to ss. 420.9072 and
2907 420.9073.

2908
2909 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

2910 And the title is amended as follows:

2911 Delete lines 31 - 39



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2912 and insert:

2913 An act relating to economic development; reenacting
2914 and amending s. 20.60, F.S.; revising the list of
2915 divisions and offices within the Department of
2916 Commerce to conform to changes made by the act;
2917 revising the annual program reports that must be
2918 included in the annual report of the Department of
2919 Commerce; amending s. 163.3168, F.S.; requiring the
2920 state land planning agency to give preference for
2921 technical assistance funding to local governments
2922 located in a rural area of opportunity; requiring the
2923 agency to consult with the Office of Rural Prosperity
2924 when awarding certain funding; amending s. 201.15,
2925 F.S.; requiring that a certain sum be paid to the
2926 credit of the State Transportation Trust Fund for the
2927 exclusive use of the Florida Arterial Road
2928 Modernization Program; amending s. 202.18, F.S.;
2929 redirecting the transfer of certain communication
2930 services tax revenue; amending s. 212.20, F.S.;
2931 revising the distribution of sales and use tax revenue
2932 to include a transfer to fiscally constrained
2933 counties; amending s. 215.971, F.S.; providing
2934 construction regarding agreements funded with federal
2935 or state assistance; requiring the agency to expedite
2936 payment requests from a county, municipality, or rural
2937 area of opportunity for a specified purpose; requiring
2938 each state agency to report to the Office of Rural
2939 Prosperity by a certain date with a summary of certain
2940 information; requiring the office to summarize the



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2941 information it receives for its annual report;
2942 amending s. 218.67, F.S.; revising the conditions
2943 required for a county to be considered a fiscally
2944 constrained county; authorizing eligible counties to
2945 receive a distribution of sales and use tax revenue;
2946 revising the sources that the Department of Revenue
2947 must use to determine the amount distributed to
2948 fiscally constrained counties; revising the factors
2949 for allocation of the distribution of revenue to
2950 fiscally constrained counties; requiring that the
2951 computation and amount distributed be calculated based
2952 on a specified rounding algorithm; authorizing
2953 specified uses for the revenue; conforming a cross-
2954 reference; amending s. 288.0001, F.S.; requiring the
2955 Office of Economic and Demographic Research and the
2956 Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government
2957 Accountability (OPPAGA) to prepare a report for a
2958 specified purpose; specifying requirements for the
2959 report; providing that the Office of Economic and
2960 Demographic Research and OPPAGA must be provided with
2961 all data necessary to complete the rural communities
2962 or areas report upon request; authorizing the Office
2963 of Economic and Demographic Research and OPPAGA to
2964 collaborate on all data collection and analysis;
2965 requiring the Office of Economic and Demographic
2966 Research and OPPAGA to submit the report to the
2967 Legislature by a specified date; providing additional
2968 requirements for the report; providing for expiration;
2969 amending s. 288.001, F.S.; requiring the Florida Small



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2970 Business Development Center Network to use certain
2971 funds appropriated for a specified purpose;
2972 authorizing the network to dedicate funds to
2973 facilitate certain events; amending s. 288.007, F.S.;
2974 revising which local governments and economic
2975 development organizations seeking to recruit
2976 businesses are required to submit a specified report;
2977 creating s. 288.013, F.S.; providing legislative
2978 findings; creating the Office of Rural Prosperity
2979 within the Department of Commerce; requiring the
2980 Governor to appoint a director, subject to
2981 confirmation by the Senate; providing that the
2982 director reports to and serves at the pleasure of the
2983 secretary of the department; providing the duties of
2984 the office; requiring the office to establish by a
2985 specified date a certain number of regional rural
2986 community liaison centers across this state for a
2987 specified purpose; providing the powers, duties, and
2988 functions of the liaison centers; requiring the
2989 liaison centers, to the extent possible, to coordinate
2990 with certain entities; requiring the liaison centers
2991 to engage with the Rural Economic Development
2992 Initiative (REDI); requiring at least one staff member
2993 of a liaison center to attend the monthly meetings in
2994 person or by means of electronic communication;
2995 requiring the director of the office to submit an
2996 annual report to the Administration Commission in the
2997 Executive Office of the Governor; specifying
2998 requirements for the annual report; requiring that the



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2999 annual report also be submitted to the Legislature by
3000 a specified date and published on the office's
3001 website; requiring the director of the office to
3002 attend the next Administration Commission meeting to
3003 present detailed information from the annual report;
3004 requiring OPPAGA to review the effectiveness of the
3005 office by a certain date annually until a specified
3006 date; requiring OPPAGA to review the office at
3007 specified intervals; requiring such reviews to include
3008 certain information to be considered by the
3009 Legislature; requiring that such reports be submitted
3010 to the Legislature; requiring OPPAGA to review certain
3011 strategies from other states; requiring OPPAGA to
3012 submit to the Legislature its findings at certain
3013 intervals; creating s. 288.014, F.S.; providing
3014 legislative findings; requiring the Office of Rural
3015 Prosperity to administer the Renaissance Grants
3016 Program to provide block grants to eligible
3017 communities; requiring the Office of Economic and
3018 Demographic Research to certify to the Office of Rural
3019 Prosperity certain information by a specified date;
3020 defining the term "growth-impeded"; requiring the
3021 Office of Economic and Demographic Research to certify
3022 annually that a county remains growth-impeded until
3023 such county has positive population growth for a
3024 specified amount of time; providing that such county,
3025 after 3 consecutive years of population growth, is
3026 eligible to participate in the program for 1
3027 additional year; requiring a county eligible for the



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3028 program to enter into an agreement with the Office of
3029 Rural Prosperity in order to receive the block grant;
3030 giving such counties broad authority to design their
3031 specific plans; prohibiting the Office of Rural
3032 Prosperity from determining how such counties
3033 implement the block grant; requiring regional rural
3034 community liaison center staff to provide assistance,
3035 upon request; requiring participating counties to
3036 report annually to the Office of Rural Prosperity with
3037 certain information; providing that a participating
3038 county receives a specified amount from funds
3039 appropriated to the program; requiring participating
3040 counties to make all attempts to limit the amount
3041 spent on administrative costs; authorizing
3042 participating counties to contribute other funds for
3043 block grant purposes; requiring participating counties
3044 to hire a renaissance coordinator; providing that
3045 funds from the block grant may be used to hire the
3046 renaissance coordinator; providing the
3047 responsibilities of the renaissance coordinator;
3048 requiring the regional rural community liaison center
3049 staff to provide assistance and training to the
3050 renaissance coordinator, upon request; requiring
3051 participating counties to design a plan to make
3052 targeted investments to achieve population growth and
3053 increase economic vitality; providing requirements for
3054 such plans; requiring participating counties to
3055 develop intergovernmental agreements with certain
3056 entities in order to implement the plan; requiring the



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3057 Auditor General to conduct an operational audit every
3058 2 years for a specified purpose; requiring the Office
3059 of Economic and Demographic Research to provide an
3060 annual report on a specified date of renaissance block
3061 grant recipients by county; providing requirements for
3062 the annual report; requiring that the report be
3063 submitted to the Legislature; prohibiting funds
3064 appropriated for the program from being subject to
3065 reversion; providing for an expiration of the section;
3066 creating s. 288.0175, F.S.; creating the Public
3067 Infrastructure Smart Technology Grant Program within
3068 the Office of Rural Prosperity; defining terms;
3069 requiring the office to contract with one or more
3070 smart technology lead organizations to administer a
3071 grant program for a specified purpose; providing the
3072 criteria for such contracts; requiring that projects
3073 funded by the grant program be included in the
3074 office's annual report; amending s. 288.018, F.S.;
3075 requiring the office, rather than the Department of
3076 Commerce, to establish a grant program to provide
3077 funding for regional economic development
3078 organizations; revising who may apply for such grants;
3079 providing that a grant award may not exceed a certain
3080 amount in a year; providing exceptions to a provision
3081 that the department may expend a certain amount for a
3082 certain purpose; amending s. 288.019, F.S.; revising
3083 the program criteria and procedures that agencies and
3084 organizations of REDI are required to review; revising
3085 the list of impacts each REDI agency and organization



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3086 must consider in its review; requiring REDI agencies
3087 and organizations to develop a proposal for
3088 modifications which minimizes the financial and
3089 resource impacts to a rural community; requiring that
3090 ranking of evaluation criteria and scoring procedures
3091 be used only when ranking is a component of the
3092 program; requiring that match requirements be waived
3093 or reduced for rural communities; providing that
3094 donations of land may be treated as in-kind matches;
3095 requiring each agency and organization that applies
3096 for or receives federal funding to request federal
3097 approval to waive or reduce the financial match
3098 requirements, if any, for projects in rural
3099 communities; requiring that proposals be submitted to
3100 the office, rather than the department; requiring each
3101 REDI agency and organization to modify rules or
3102 policies as necessary to reflect the finalized
3103 proposal; requiring that information about authorized
3104 waivers be included on the office's online rural
3105 resource directory; conforming a cross-reference;
3106 amending s. 288.021, F.S.; requiring, when
3107 practicable, the economic development liaison to serve
3108 as the agency representative for REDI; amending s.
3109 288.065, F.S.; defining the term "unit of local
3110 government"; requiring the office to include in its
3111 annual report certain information about the Rural
3112 Community Development Revolving Loan Fund; conforming
3113 provisions to changes made by the act; amending s.
3114 288.0655, F.S.; revising the list of grants that may



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3115 be awarded by the office; deleting the authorization
3116 for local match requirements to be waived for a
3117 catalyst site; revising the list of departments the
3118 office must consult with to certify applicants;
3119 requiring the office to include certain information
3120 about the Rural Infrastructure Trust Fund in its
3121 annual report; conforming provisions to changes made
3122 by the act; amending s. 288.0656, F.S.; providing
3123 legislative findings; providing that REDI is created
3124 within the Office of Rural Prosperity, rather than the
3125 department; deleting the definitions of the terms
3126 "catalyst project" and "catalyst site"; requiring that
3127 an alternate for each designated deputy secretary be a
3128 deputy secretary or higher-level staff person;
3129 requiring that the names of such alternates be
3130 reported to the director of the office; requiring at
3131 least one rural liaison to participate in REDI
3132 meetings; requiring REDI to meet at least each month;
3133 deleting a provision that a rural area of opportunity
3134 may designate catalyst projects; requiring REDI to
3135 submit a certain report to the office, rather than to
3136 the department; specifying requirements for such
3137 report; conforming provisions to changes made by the
3138 act; repealing s. 288.06561, F.S., relating to
3139 reduction or waiver of financial match requirements;
3140 amending s. 288.0657, F.S.; requiring the office,
3141 rather than the department, to provide grants to
3142 assist rural communities; providing that such grants
3143 may be used for specified purposes; requiring the



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3144 rural liaison to assist those applying for such
3145 grants; providing that marketing grants may include
3146 certain funding; amending s. 288.1226, F.S.; revising
3147 required components of the 4-year marketing plan of
3148 the Florida Tourism Industry Marketing Corporation;
3149 repealing s. 288.12266, F.S., relating to the Targeted
3150 Marketing Assistance Program; amending s. 288.9961,
3151 F.S.; revising the definition of the term
3152 "underserved"; requiring the office to consult with
3153 regional rural community liaison centers on
3154 development of a certain strategic plan; requiring
3155 rural liaisons to assist rural communities with
3156 providing feedback in applying for federal grants for
3157 broadband Internet services; requiring the office to
3158 submit reports with specified information to the
3159 Governor and the Legislature within certain
3160 timeframes; repealing s. 290.06561, F.S., relating to
3161 designation of rural enterprise zones as catalyst
3162 sites; amending s. 319.32, F.S.; revising the
3163 disposition of fees collected for certain title
3164 certificates; amending s. 322.095, F.S.; specifying
3165 the age at which an applicant for a driver license
3166 must complete a traffic law and substance abuse
3167 education course; amending s. 322.1615, F.S.;
3168 requiring an applicant for a learner's driver license
3169 to complete a certain driver education course approved
3170 by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor
3171 Vehicles; amending s. 334.044, F.S.; revising the
3172 powers and duties of the Department of Transportation;



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3173 amending s. 339.0801, F.S.; revising the allocation of
3174 funds received in the State Transportation Trust Fund;
3175 amending s. 339.135, F.S.; requiring that funds for
3176 rural transit operating block grants be allocated in a
3177 certain manner; amending s. 339.2816, F.S.; requiring,
3178 rather than authorizing, that certain funds received
3179 from the State Transportation Trust Fund be used for
3180 the Small County Road Assistance Program; requiring
3181 the department to use other additional revenues for
3182 the Small County Road Assistance Program; providing an
3183 exception from the prohibition against funding
3184 capacity improvements on county roads; amending s.
3185 339.2817, F.S.; revising the criteria that the
3186 Department of Transportation must consider for
3187 evaluating projects for County Incentive Grant Program
3188 assistance; requiring the department to give priority
3189 to counties located either wholly or partially within
3190 the Everglades Agricultural Area and which request a
3191 specified percentage of project costs for eligible
3192 projects; specifying a limitation on such requests;
3193 providing for future expiration; amending s. 339.2818,
3194 F.S.; deleting a provision that the funds allocated
3195 under the Small County Outreach Program are in
3196 addition to the Small County Road Assistance Program;
3197 deleting a provision that a local government within
3198 the Everglades Agricultural Area, the Peace River
3199 Basin, or the Suwannee River Basin may compete for
3200 additional funding; conforming provisions to changes
3201 made by the act; making a technical change; amending



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3202 s. 339.68, F.S.; providing legislative findings;
3203 creating the Florida Arterial Road Modernization
3204 Program within the Department of Commerce; defining
3205 the term "rural community"; requiring the department
3206 to allocate from the State Transportation Trust Fund a
3207 minimum sum in each fiscal year to fund the program;
3208 providing that such funding is in addition to any
3209 other funding provided to the program; providing
3210 criteria the department must use to prioritize
3211 projects for funding under the program; requiring the
3212 department to submit a report to the Governor and the
3213 Legislature by a specified date; requiring that such
3214 report be submitted every 2 years thereafter;
3215 providing the criteria for such report; requiring the
3216 Department of Transportation to allocate additional
3217 funds to implement the Small County Road Assistance
3218 Program and amend the tentative work program for a
3219 specified number of fiscal years; requiring the
3220 department to submit a budget amendment before the
3221 adoption of the work program; requiring the department
3222 to allocate sufficient funds to implement the Florida
3223 Arterial Road Modernization Program; requiring the
3224 department to amend the current tentative work program
3225 for a specified number of fiscal years to include the
3226 program's projects; requiring the department to submit
3227 a budget amendment before the implementation of the
3228 program; requiring that the revenue increases in the
3229 State Transportation Trust Fund which are derived from
3230 the act be used to fund the work program; amending s.



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3231 341.052, F.S.; revising the list of providers to which
3232 certain block grant funds shall be provided; revising
3233 the specified report used to verify certain data;
3234 creating s. 341.0525, F.S.; creating a rural transit
3235 operating block grant program to be administered by
3236 the department; requiring the annual allocation of
3237 certain funds from the State Transportation Trust Fund
3238 for the program; providing for the distribution of
3239 funds to each eligible public transit provider in at
3240 least a certain amount; providing authorized uses of
3241 grant funds; prohibiting state participation in
3242 certain costs above a specified percentage or amount;
3243 prohibiting an eligible public transit provider from
3244 using block grant funds in a certain manner; providing
3245 an exception; prohibiting the state from giving a
3246 county more than a specified percentage of available
3247 funds or a certain amount; providing eligibility
3248 requirements; requiring an eligible provider to return
3249 funds under certain circumstances; authorizing the
3250 department to consult with an eligible provider before
3251 distributing funds to make a certain determination;
3252 requiring an eligible provider to repay to the
3253 department funds expended on unauthorized uses if
3254 revealed in an audit; requiring the department to
3255 redistribute returned and repaid funds to other
3256 eligible providers; amending s. 420.9073, F.S.;
3257 revising the calculation of guaranteed amounts
3258 distributed from the Local Government Housing Trust
3259 Fund; reenacting and amending s. 420.9075, F.S.;



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3260 authorizing a certain percentage of the funds made
3261 available in each county and eligible municipality
3262 from the local housing distribution to be used to
3263 preserve multifamily affordable rental housing;
3264 specifying what such funds may be used for; providing
3265 an expiration; providing appropriations for specified
3266 purposes; amending ss. 163.3187, 212.205, 257.191,
3267 257.193, 265.283, 288.11621, 288.11631, 443.191,
3268 571.26, and 571.265, F.S.; conforming cross-references
3269 and provisions to changes made by the act; reenacting
3270 s. 288.9935(8), F.S., relating to the Microfinance
3271 Guarantee Program, to incorporate the amendment made
3272 to s. 20.60, F.S., in a reference thereto; reenacting
3273 ss. 125.0104(5)(c), 193.624(3), 196.182(2), 218.12(1),
3274 218.125(1), 218.135(1), 218.136(1), 252.35(2)(cc),
3275 288.102(4), 403.064(16)(g), 589.08(2) and (3), and
3276 1011.62(1)(f), F.S., relating to authorized uses of
3277 tourist development tax; applicability of assessments
3278 of renewable energy source devices; application of
3279 exemptions of renewable energy source devices;
3280 appropriations to offset reductions in ad valorem tax
3281 revenue in fiscally constrained counties; offset for
3282 tax loss associated with certain constitutional
3283 amendments affecting fiscally constrained counties;
3284 offset for tax loss associated with reductions in
3285 value of certain citrus fruit packing and processing
3286 equipment; offset for ad valorem revenue loss
3287 affecting fiscally constrained counties; Division of
3288 Emergency Management powers; one-to-one match



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3289 requirement under the Supply Chain Innovation Grant
3290 Program; applicability of provisions related to reuse
3291 of reclaimed water; land acquisition restrictions; and
3292 funds for operation of schools, respectively, to
3293 incorporate the amendment made to s. 218.67, F.S., in
3294 references thereto; reenacting s. 403.0741(6)(c),
3295 F.S., relating to grease waste removal and disposal,
3296 to incorporate the amendments made to ss. 218.67 and
3297 339.2818, F.S., in references thereto; reenacting s.
3298 163.3177(7)(e), F.S., relating to required and
3299 optional elements of comprehensive plans and studies
3300 and surveys, to incorporate the amendment made to s.
3301 288.0656, F.S., in a reference thereto; reenacting s.
3302 288.9962(7)(a), F.S., relating to the Broadband
3303 Opportunity Program, to incorporate the amendment made
3304 to s. 288.9961, F.S., in a reference thereto;
3305 reenacting s. 215.211(1), F.S., relating to service
3306 charges and elimination or reduction for specified
3307 proceeds, to incorporate the amendment made to s.
3308 319.32, F.S., in a reference thereto; reenacting s.
3309 339.66(5) and (6), F.S., relating to upgrades of
3310 arterial highways with controlled access facilities,
3311 to incorporate the amendment made to s. 339.68, F.S.,
3312 in references thereto; reenacting ss. 420.9072(4) and
3313 (6), 420.9076(7)(b), and 420.9079(2), F.S., relating
3314 to the State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program,
3315 adoption of affordable housing incentive strategies
3316 and committees, and the Local Government Housing Trust
3317 Fund, respectively, to incorporate the amendment made



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to s. 420.9073, F.S., in references thereto; providing
an effective date.