



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 267

February Session, 2006

* SB00267CE 031506 *

AN ACT CONCERNING REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2006*) (a) Any of the following
2 entities may, either individually or in conjunction with one or more
3 other such entities, establish a regional economic development district
4 for the purposes of sections 1 to 5, inclusive, and 7 and 8 of this act and
5 section 16a-27 of the 2006 supplement to the general statutes, as
6 amended by this act: (1) A regional economic development
7 commission formed under section 7-137 of the general statutes, (2) any
8 organization that has a plan that meets the requirements of section 2 of
9 this act that has been approved by the Assistant Secretary of Economic
10 Development of the United States Department of Commerce, (3) a
11 corporation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(a) of
12 the Internal Revenue Code, (4) another regional economic
13 development commission or corporation formed under any other
14 provision of the general statutes or any special act, (5) a regional
15 planning agency organized under the provisions of chapter 127 of the
16 general statutes, (6) a regional council of governments organized
17 under sections 4-124i to 4-124p, inclusive, of the general statutes, or (7)
18 a regional council of elected officials organized under the provisions of
19 chapter 50 of the general statutes for planning and implementation of
20 regional economic development. The entity or entities establishing a
21 regional economic development district shall provide for a board of

22 directors of the district.

23 (b) The boundaries of such districts shall, to the extent practicable,
24 be contiguous with boundaries of labor market areas, as determined by
25 the Labor Commissioner, or encompass a region that has developed a
26 plan that meets the requirements of section 2 of this act and has been
27 approved by the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic
28 Development.

29 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2006*) (a) The board of directors of a
30 regional economic development district shall prepare and approve a
31 comprehensive economic development strategy for the district to
32 address identified economic development problems in a manner that
33 promotes economic development and opportunity, fosters effective
34 transportation access, improves workforce development, enhances and
35 protects the environment and balances resources through sound
36 management of development. A comprehensive economic
37 development strategy shall contain:

38 (1) An analysis of economic and community development problems
39 and opportunities, including incorporation of any relevant material or
40 suggestions from other government-sponsored or supported plans;

41 (2) Background and history of the economic development situation
42 in the district, with a discussion of the economy, geography,
43 population, labor force, resources and the environment;

44 (3) A discussion of community participation in the planning efforts
45 for the strategy;

46 (4) The goals and objectives for (A) taking advantage of the
47 opportunities in the district, and (B) solving the economic
48 development problems of the district;

49 (5) A plan of action, including suggested projects to implement the
50 goals and objectives set forth in subdivision (4) of this subsection; and

51 (6) Performance measures that will be used to evaluate whether and

52 to what extent such goals and objectives have been met.

53 (b) Upon approving the comprehensive economic development
54 strategy for a district, the board of directors of the district shall submit
55 the strategy to the regional council of governments, regional councils
56 of elected officials and regional planning agencies serving any portion
57 of the geographical area of such district, provided such regional
58 council of elected officials or regional planning agencies are not part of
59 the regional economic development district pursuant to section 1 of
60 this act. The regional council of governments, regional council of
61 elected officials and regional planning agencies shall study such
62 proposal and shall report their findings and recommendations thereon
63 to the district not later than ninety days after the receipt of the strategy.

64 (c) After review and comment on the comprehensive economic
65 development strategy under subsection (b) of this section, the board of
66 directors of the district shall submit the strategy to the Commissioner
67 of Economic and Community Development and the Secretary of the
68 Office of Policy and Management. The secretary and the commissioner
69 shall review the strategy and, not later than forty-five days after
70 receiving the strategy, shall notify said board of directors of either the
71 approval of the strategy or recommendations for modifying the
72 strategy for consistency with the state plan of conservation and
73 development adopted pursuant to chapter 297 of the general statutes
74 and the state-wide comprehensive economic development strategy
75 required under section 4 of this act. If neither the commissioner nor the
76 secretary notifies the board within said forty-five days, the strategy
77 shall be deemed to have been approved. If said commissioner or
78 secretary recommends modifications, the board shall modify the
79 strategy in accordance with such recommendations and resubmit the
80 strategy for review in the same manner as for the original submission
81 of the strategy.

82 (d) The board of directors of a regional economic development
83 district shall, annually, report to the commissioner and the secretary on
84 progress made in implementing the comprehensive economic

85 development strategy. A new or revised strategy shall be developed at
86 least once every five years. The board shall submit each new or revised
87 strategy for review and approval in accordance with the same
88 procedure as for a new strategy under subsections (b) and (c) of this
89 section.

90 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2006*) (a) Upon approval by the
91 Commissioner of Economic and Community Development and the
92 Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management of a comprehensive
93 economic development strategy for a regional economic development
94 district, the board of directors of said district may submit the strategy
95 to the Assistant Secretary of the United States Department of
96 Commerce for approval pursuant to Chapter 38 of Title 42 of the
97 United States Code and regulations adopted pursuant to said Chapter
98 38, unless such comprehensive economic development strategy was
99 submitted to and approved by said assistant secretary before the
100 effective date of this section.

101 (b) The board of directors of a regional economic development
102 district that submits a comprehensive economic development strategy
103 to the Assistant Secretary of the United States Department of
104 Commerce or has previously submitted and received the approval of
105 said secretary of such a strategy may apply to said secretary for federal
106 designation of the economic development district pursuant to Chapter
107 38 of Title 42 of the United States Code and regulations adopted
108 pursuant to said Chapter 38. Approval by the Commissioner of
109 Economic and Community Development of the comprehensive
110 economic development strategy under section 2 of this act shall be
111 deemed to meet the requirements of said Chapter 38 and regulations
112 with regard to gubernatorial approval of the economic development
113 district application.

114 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2006*) Not later than March 1, 2007, the
115 Commissioner of Economic and Community Development shall
116 prepare a state-wide comprehensive economic development strategy.
117 In the development of the state strategy, the commissioner shall (1)

118 consider local and economic development district plans and ensure, to
119 the extent practicable, that the state plan is consistent with the local
120 and economic development district plan, and (2) identify any
121 inconsistencies between the state strategy and the local and economic
122 development district plans and provide justification for each
123 inconsistency. Such state strategy shall, on a state-wide basis, address
124 the issues and include the content required for a regional
125 comprehensive economic development strategy required under
126 subsection (a) of section 2 of this act.

127 Sec. 5. Section 16a-27 of the 2006 supplement to the general statutes
128 is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July*
129 *1, 2006*):

130 (a) The secretary, after consultation with all appropriate state,
131 regional and local agencies and other appropriate persons, shall prior
132 to March 1, 2009, complete a revision of the existing plan and enlarge it
133 to include, but not be limited to, policies relating to transportation,
134 energy and air. Any revision made after May 15, 1991, shall identify
135 the major transportation proposals, including proposals for mass
136 transit, contained in the master transportation plan prepared pursuant
137 to section 13b-15. Any revision made after July 1, 1995, shall take into
138 consideration the conservation and development of greenways that
139 have been designated by municipalities and shall recommend that
140 state agencies coordinate their efforts to support the development of a
141 state-wide greenways system. The Commissioner of Environmental
142 Protection shall identify state-owned land for inclusion in the plan as
143 potential components of a state greenways system.

144 (b) Any revision made after August 20, 2003, shall take into account
145 (1) economic and community development needs and patterns of
146 commerce, and (2) linkages of affordable housing objectives and land
147 use objectives with transportation systems.

148 (c) Any revision made after March 1, 2006, shall (1) take into
149 consideration risks associated with natural hazards, including, but not

150 limited to, flooding, high winds and wildfires; (2) identify the potential
151 impacts of natural hazards on infrastructure and property; [and] (3)
152 make recommendations for the siting of future infrastructure and
153 property development to minimize the use of areas prone to natural
154 hazards, including, but not limited to, flooding, high winds and
155 wildfires; and (4) consider the state-wide comprehensive economic
156 development strategy prepared by the Commissioner of Economic and
157 Community Development under section 4 of this act.

158 (d) Any revision after July 1, 2005, shall describe the progress
159 towards achievement of the goals and objectives established in the
160 previously adopted state plan of conservation and development and
161 shall identify (1) areas where it is prudent and feasible (A) to have
162 compact, transit accessible, pedestrian-oriented mixed-use
163 development patterns and land reuse, and (B) to promote such
164 development patterns and land reuse, (2) priority funding areas
165 designated under section 16a-35c, and (3) corridor management areas
166 on either side of a limited access highway or a rail line. In designating
167 corridor management areas, the secretary shall make
168 recommendations that (A) promote land use and transportation
169 options to reduce the growth of traffic congestion; (B) connect
170 infrastructure and other development decisions; (C) promote
171 development that minimizes the cost of new infrastructure facilities
172 and maximizes the use of existing infrastructure facilities; and (D)
173 increase intermunicipal and regional cooperation.

174 (e) Thereafter on or before March first in each revision year the
175 secretary shall complete a revision of the plan of conservation and
176 development.

177 Sec. 6. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2006*) Regional planning agencies
178 shall consider the comprehensive economic development strategies
179 prepared under section 2 of this act in regional plans of development
180 required under section 8-35a of the 2006 supplement to the general
181 statutes.

182 Sec. 7. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2006*) The Commissioner of Economic
183 and Community Development may, within available appropriations,
184 make grants to regional economic development districts to develop,
185 amend and implement comprehensive economic development
186 strategies under section 2 of this act.

187 Sec. 8. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2006*) Projects identified in
188 comprehensive economic development strategies approved by the
189 Commissioner of Economic and Community Development, the
190 Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management and the Assistant
191 Secretary of the United States Department of Commerce under section
192 3 of this act shall be eligible projects for funding with bond funds
193 available to the Commissioner of Economic and Community
194 Development.

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| This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: | | |
| Section 1 | <i>July 1, 2006</i> | New section |
| Sec. 2 | <i>July 1, 2006</i> | New section |
| Sec. 3 | <i>July 1, 2006</i> | New section |
| Sec. 4 | <i>July 1, 2006</i> | New section |
| Sec. 5 | <i>July 1, 2006</i> | 16a-27 |
| Sec. 6 | <i>July 1, 2006</i> | New section |
| Sec. 7 | <i>July 1, 2006</i> | New section |
| Sec. 8 | <i>July 1, 2006</i> | New section |

CE *Joint Favorable Subst.*