



Senate

General Assembly

February Session, 2008

File No. 445

Senate Bill No. 394

Senate, April 4, 2008

The Committee on Commerce reported through SEN. LEBEAU of the 3rd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING THE TRANSFER OF THE OFFICE OF THE BUSINESS ADVOCATE.

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

1 Section 1. Section 32-725 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2008*):

3 (a) There is established an Office of the Business Advocate. The
4 Governor, with the approval of the General Assembly, shall appoint a
5 person with knowledge of the characteristics and needs of businesses
6 and the resources provided by state, federal, quasi-governmental and
7 other organizations that are available to businesses. Such person shall
8 be qualified by training and experience to perform the duties of the
9 office as set forth in this section. The person appointed the Business
10 Advocate shall serve for a term of four years and may be reappointed
11 or shall continue to hold office until such person's successor is
12 appointed and qualified, or until removed as provided in section 16-5.

13 (b) The Office of the Business Advocate shall be in the [Office of

14 Policy and Management] Department of Economic and Community
15 Development for administrative purposes only.

16 (c) The Business Advocate may, within available funds, appoint
17 such staff as may be deemed necessary. The duties of the staff may
18 include the duties and powers of the Business Advocate if performed
19 under the direction of the Business Advocate.

20 (d) The General Assembly may annually appropriate such sums as
21 necessary for the payment of the salaries of the staff and for the
22 payment of office expenses and other actual expenses incurred by the
23 Business Advocate in the performance of such advocate's duties.

24 (e) [The] On or before January 1, 2008, and annually thereafter, the
25 Business Advocate shall [annually] submit to the Governor and the
26 chairpersons of the joint standing committees of the General Assembly
27 having cognizance of matters relating to commerce and finance,
28 revenue and bonding, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-
29 4a, a detailed report analyzing the work of the Office of the Business
30 Advocate, including a list of businesses and the services provided to
31 them by such office.

32 (f) The Business Advocate shall (1) serve as an information
33 clearinghouse for various public and private programs available to
34 assist businesses, and (2) identify specific micro businesses, as defined
35 in section 32-344, whose growth and success could benefit from state
36 or private assistance and contact such small businesses in order to (A)
37 identify their needs, (B) provide information about public and private
38 programs for meeting such needs, including, but not limited to,
39 technical assistance, job training and financial assistance, and (C)
40 arrange for the provision of such assistance to such businesses.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2008	32-725

CE *Joint Favorable*

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose:

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 09 \$	FY 10 \$
Department of Economic & Community Development; Policy & Mgmt., Off.	GF - Implements the Budget	See Below	See Below

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill, which transfers the Office of the Business Advocate from the Office of Policy and Management to the Department of Economic and Community Development for administrative purposes only, implements a provision of the budget bill, sHB 5021 as favorably reported by the Appropriations Committee on March 26, 2008.

OLR Bill Analysis**SB 394*****AN ACT CONCERNING THE TRANSFER OF THE OFFICE OF THE BUSINESS ADVOCATE.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill moves the Office of the Business Advocate from the Office of Policy and Management to the Department of Economic and Community Development. As under current law, the office's placement is for administrative purposes only.

By law, the Office of the Business Advocate serves as an information clearinghouse on public and private business assistance programs. It must identify micro businesses and contact micro and small businesses that could benefit from these programs. The business advocate is appointed by the governor with the legislature's approval to a four-year term.

Currently, the advocate must report annually to the Commerce and Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee, but the law specifies no reporting date. The bill requires him to report by January 1, beginning in 2008. The advocate submitted the 2008 report.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2008

COMMITTEE ACTION

Commerce Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 22 Nay 0 (03/18/2008)