AN ACT CONCERNING OPPORTUNITY ZONES.

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

Section 1. (Effective from passage) The Commissioner of Economic and Community Development shall, not later than January 1, 2020, collaborate with local, private and civic partners to host a series of not less than five regional events in the state advertising the state's federally designated opportunity zones.

Sec. 2. (Effective from passage) The Commissioner of Economic and Community Development shall conduct a study relating to the federal opportunity zone program, established pursuant to the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, P.L. 115-97, and how the state may incentivize the use of such program in the state. Such study shall: (1) Identify corporations and other beneficiaries of capital gains within the state to develop a strategy that focuses such corporations and other beneficiaries' qualified opportunity fund investments locally and encourages a cycling of capital within the state; (2) identify existing state incentive programs that may be used in conjunction with opportunity zone benefits; (3) identify existing incentives for businesses participating in
the small business express program to move to opportunity zones and recommend additional incentives, including, but not limited to, reducing the amount of time a business is required to be in business to qualify for a grant and increasing the grant amount for every job created; (4) develop a plan to issue bonds of the state for the purpose of providing low-interest loans to investors who develop mixed-income housing in the state's opportunity zones; and (5) recommend incentives for investors to develop mixed-income housing that utilizes solar power or other renewable energy sources in the state's opportunity zones. Not later than February 1, 2020, the commissioner shall submit a report on the results of such study, including recommendations for any requisite legislative proposals, to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to commerce, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

Sec. 3. Subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of section 32-726 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2019):

(b) (1) The commissioner shall establish an office of the permit ombudsman for the purpose of expediting review of permit applications for projects that would (A) create at least one hundred jobs, (B) create fifty jobs, if such project is to be located in an enterprise zone designated pursuant to section 32-70, (C) be located in a brownfield, as defined in section 32-760, (D) be compatible with the state's responsible growth initiatives, (E) be considered transit-oriented development, as defined in section 13b-79kk, (F) develop green technology business, (G) develop bioscience business, (H) develop any of the state's federally designated opportunity zones, or [(H)] (I) meet the criteria set forth in subdivision (2) of this subsection. Projects ineligible for review under this section are projects for which the primary purpose is to (i) effect the final disposal of solid waste, biomedical waste or hazardous waste in this state, (ii) produce electrical power, unless the production of electricity is incidental and
not the primary function of the project, (iii) extract natural resources, (iv) produce oil, or (v) construct, maintain or operate an oil, petroleum, natural gas or sewage pipeline. For purposes of this section, "responsible growth initiatives" includes the principles of smart growth, as defined in section 1 of public act 09-230, and "green technology business" means an eligible business with not less than twenty-five per cent of its employment positions being positions in which green technology is employed or developed and may include the occupation codes identified as green jobs by the Department of Economic and Community Development and the Labor Department for such purposes. The permit ombudsman shall also assist and provide guidance to bioscience businesses seeking to expedite the review and approval of permits required by local zoning authorities.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

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<tr>
<th>Section 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sec. 2</td>
<td>from passage</td>
<td>New section</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sec. 3</td>
<td>July 1, 2019</td>
<td>32-726(b)(1)</td>
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**CE Joint Favorable**