
OLR BILL ANALYSIS

HB 6383

AN ACT CREATING AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GRANTS PROGRAM.

SUMMARY:

This bill requires the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) commissioner to establish a grant program to fund various economic development activities, including some that are currently funded under separate programs. The new activities that can be funded under the program are:

1. promoting, retaining, and expanding the state's hydrogen and fuel cell industries;
2. promoting research innovation and nanotechnology; and
3. developing marine science, maritime, and homeland security defense industries.

The bill funds the latter by reallocating an existing \$1 million Manufacturing Assistance Act bond authorization for the Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology (CCAT) to develop a supply chain integration center.

The bill also requires the commissioner to fund several already authorized activities under the new program and makes conforming technical changes. These activities are:

1. promoting supply chain integration and encouraging business to adopt digital manufacturing and information technologies, which under current law is performed by CCAT;
2. training small businesses in high performance work practices, which is current performed by the Connecticut State Technology Extension Program (CONNSTEP);

3. providing technical assistance to small business owners; and
4. developing small business incubators for all types of small businesses, not just technology-based ones as current law provides.

The bill eliminates a 1998 \$4 million bond authorization for CONNSTEP.

The bill requires the commissioner to specify how entities may apply for these grants. In doing so, he must include a request for proposals or a competitive award process. (The bill appears to limit the grants for developing marine science, maritime, and homeland security defense industries to CCAT.)

DECD can administer the grants itself or under a personal services agreement with a person, firm, corporation, or other entity.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2011