

By Senator Simon

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to rural communities; amending s.
3 20.60, F.S.; revising the list of divisions and
4 offices within the Department of Commerce to conform
5 to changes made by the act; revising the annual
6 program reports that must be included in the annual
7 report of the Department of Commerce; amending s.
8 163.3168, F.S.; requiring the state land planning
9 agency to give preference for technical assistance
10 funding to local governments located in a rural area
11 of opportunity; requiring the agency to consult with
12 the Office of Rural Prosperity when awarding certain
13 funding; amending s. 201.15, F.S.; requiring that a
14 certain sum be paid to the credit of the State
15 Transportation Trust Fund for the exclusive use of the
16 Florida Arterial Road Modernization Program; amending
17 s. 202.18, F.S.; redirecting the transfer of certain
18 communication services tax revenue; amending s.
19 212.20, F.S.; revising the distribution of sales and
20 use tax revenue to include a transfer to fiscally
21 constrained counties; amending s. 215.971, F.S.;
22 providing construction regarding agreements funded
23 with federal or state assistance; requiring each state
24 agency to report to the Office of Rural Prosperity by
25 a certain date with a summary of certain information;
26 requiring the office to summarize the information it
27 receives for its annual report; amending s. 218.67,
28 F.S.; revising the conditions required for a county to
29 be considered a fiscally constrained county;

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30 authorizing eligible counties to receive a
31 distribution of sales and use tax revenue; revising
32 the sources that the Department of Revenue must use to
33 determine the amount distributed to fiscally
34 constrained counties; revising the factors for
35 allocation of the distribution of revenue to fiscally
36 constrained counties; requiring that the computation
37 and amount distributed be calculated based on a
38 specified rounding algorithm; authorizing specified
39 uses for the revenue; conforming a cross-reference;
40 amending s. 288.0001, F.S.; requiring the Office of
41 Economic and Demographic Research and the Office of
42 Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability
43 (OPPAGA) to prepare a report for a specified purpose;
44 specifying requirements for the report; providing that
45 the Office of Economic and Demographic Research and
46 OPPAGA must be provided with all data necessary to
47 complete the rural communities or areas report upon
48 request; authorizing the Office of Economic and
49 Demographic Research and OPPAGA to collaborate on all
50 data collection and analysis; requiring the Office of
51 Economic and Demographic Research and OPPAGA to submit
52 the report to the Legislature by a specified date;
53 providing additional requirements for the report;
54 providing for expiration; amending s. 288.001, F.S.;
55 requiring the Florida Small Business Development
56 Center Network to use certain funds appropriated for a
57 specified purpose; authorizing the network to dedicate
58 funds to facilitate certain events; amending s.

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59 288.007, F.S.; revising which local governments and
60 economic development organizations seeking to recruit
61 businesses are required to submit a specified report;
62 creating s. 288.013, F.S.; providing legislative
63 findings; creating the Office of Rural Prosperity
64 within the Department of Commerce; requiring the
65 Governor to appoint a director, subject to
66 confirmation by the Senate; providing that the
67 director reports to and serves at the pleasure of the
68 secretary of the department; providing the duties of
69 the office; requiring the office to establish by a
70 specified date a certain number of regional rural
71 community liaison centers across this state for a
72 specified purpose; providing the powers, duties, and
73 functions of the liaison centers; requiring the
74 liaison centers, to the extent possible, to coordinate
75 with certain entities; requiring the liaison centers
76 to engage with the Rural Economic Development
77 Initiative (REDI); requiring at least one staff member
78 of a liaison center to attend the monthly meetings in
79 person or by means of electronic communication;
80 requiring the director of the office to submit an
81 annual report to the Administration Commission in the
82 Executive Office of the Governor; specifying
83 requirements for the annual report; requiring that the
84 annual report also be submitted to the Legislature by
85 a specified date and published on the office's
86 website; requiring the director of the office to
87 attend the next Administration Commission meeting to

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88 present detailed information from the annual report;
89 requiring OPPAGA to review the effectiveness of the
90 office by a certain date annually until a specified
91 date; requiring OPPAGA to review the office at
92 specified intervals; requiring such reviews to include
93 certain information to be considered by the
94 Legislature; requiring that such reports be submitted
95 to the Legislature; requiring OPPAGA to review certain
96 strategies from other states; requiring OPPAGA to
97 submit to the Legislature its findings at certain
98 intervals; creating s. 288.014, F.S.; providing
99 legislative findings; requiring the Office of Rural
100 Prosperity to administer the Renaissance Grants
101 Program to provide block grants to eligible
102 communities; requiring the Office of Economic and
103 Demographic Research to certify to the Office of Rural
104 Prosperity certain information by a specified date;
105 defining the term "growth-impeded"; requiring the
106 Office of Economic and Demographic Research to certify
107 annually that a county remains growth-impeded until
108 such county has positive population growth for a
109 specified amount of time; providing that such county,
110 after 3 consecutive years of population growth, is
111 eligible to participate in the program for 1
112 additional year; requiring a county eligible for the
113 program to enter into an agreement with the Office of
114 Rural Prosperity in order to receive the block grant;
115 giving such counties broad authority to design their
116 specific plans; prohibiting the Office of Rural

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117 Prosperity from determining how such counties
118 implement the block grant; requiring regional rural
119 community liaison center staff to provide assistance,
120 upon request; requiring participating counties to
121 report annually to the Office of Rural Prosperity with
122 certain information; providing that a participating
123 county receives a specified amount from funds
124 appropriated to the program; requiring participating
125 counties to make all attempts to limit the amount
126 spent on administrative costs; authorizing
127 participating counties to contribute other funds for
128 block grant purposes; requiring participating counties
129 to hire a renaissance coordinator; providing that
130 funds from the block grant may be used to hire the
131 renaissance coordinator; providing the
132 responsibilities of the renaissance coordinator;
133 requiring the regional rural community liaison center
134 staff to provide assistance and training to the
135 renaissance coordinator, upon request; requiring
136 participating counties to design a plan to make
137 targeted investments to achieve population growth and
138 increase economic vitality; providing requirements for
139 such plans; requiring participating counties to
140 develop intergovernmental agreements with certain
141 entities in order to implement the plan; requiring the
142 Auditor General to conduct an operational audit every
143 2 years for a specified purpose; requiring the Office
144 of Economic and Demographic Research to provide an
145 annual report on a specified date of renaissance block

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146 grant recipients by county; providing requirements for
147 the annual report; requiring that the report be
148 submitted to the Governor and the Legislature;
149 prohibiting funds appropriated for the program from
150 being subject to reversion; providing for an
151 expiration of the section; creating s. 288.0175, F.S.;
152 creating the Public Infrastructure Smart Technology
153 Grant Program within the Office of Rural Prosperity;
154 defining terms; requiring the office to contract with
155 one or more smart technology lead organizations to
156 administer a grant program for a specified purpose;
157 providing the criteria for such contracts; requiring
158 that projects funded by the grant program be included
159 in the office's annual report; amending s. 288.018,
160 F.S.; requiring the office, rather than the Department
161 of Commerce, to establish a grant program to provide
162 funding for regional economic development
163 organizations; revising who may apply for such grants;
164 providing that a grant award may not exceed a certain
165 amount in a year; providing exceptions to a provision
166 that the department may expend a certain amount for a
167 certain purpose; amending s. 288.019, F.S.; revising
168 the program criteria and procedures that agencies and
169 organizations of REDI are required to review; revising
170 the list of impacts each REDI agency and organization
171 must consider in its review; requiring REDI agencies
172 and organizations to develop a proposal for
173 modifications which minimizes the financial and
174 resource impacts to a rural community; requiring that

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175 ranking of evaluation criteria and scoring procedures
176 be used only when ranking is a component of the
177 program; requiring that match requirements be waived
178 or reduced for rural communities; providing that
179 donations of land may be treated as in-kind matches;
180 requiring each agency and organization that applies
181 for or receives federal funding to request federal
182 approval to waive or reduce the financial match
183 requirements, if any, for projects in rural
184 communities; requiring that proposals be submitted to
185 the office, rather than the department; requiring each
186 REDI agency and organization to modify rules or
187 policies as necessary to reflect the finalized
188 proposal; requiring that information about authorized
189 waivers be included on the office's online rural
190 resource directory; conforming a cross-reference;
191 amending s. 288.021, F.S.; requiring, when
192 practicable, the economic development liaison to serve
193 as the agency representative for REDI; amending s.
194 288.065, F.S.; defining the term "unit of local
195 government"; requiring the office to include in its
196 annual report certain information about the Rural
197 Community Development Revolving Loan Fund; conforming
198 provisions to changes made by the act; amending s.
199 288.0655, F.S.; revising the list of grants that may
200 be awarded by the office; deleting the authorization
201 for local match requirements to be waived for a
202 catalyst site; revising the list of departments the
203 office must consult with to certify applicants;

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204 requiring the office to include certain information
205 about the Rural Infrastructure Trust Fund in its
206 annual report; conforming provisions to changes made
207 by the act; amending s. 288.0656, F.S.; providing
208 legislative findings; providing that REDI is created
209 within the Office of Rural Prosperity, rather than the
210 department; deleting the definitions of the terms
211 "catalyst project" and "catalyst site"; requiring that
212 an alternate for each designated deputy secretary be a
213 deputy secretary or higher-level staff person;
214 requiring that the names of such alternates be
215 reported to the director of the office; requiring at
216 least one rural liaison to participate in REDI
217 meetings; requiring REDI to meet at least each month;
218 deleting a provision that a rural area of opportunity
219 may designate catalyst projects; requiring REDI to
220 submit a certain report to the office, rather than to
221 the department; specifying requirements for such
222 report; conforming provisions to changes made by the
223 act; repealing s. 288.06561, F.S., relating to
224 reduction or waiver of financial match requirements;
225 amending s. 288.0657, F.S.; requiring the office,
226 rather than the department, to provide grants to
227 assist rural communities; providing that such grants
228 may be used for specified purposes; requiring the
229 rural liaison to assist those applying for such
230 grants; providing that marketing grants may include
231 certain funding; amending s. 288.9961, F.S.; revising
232 the definition of the term "underserved"; requiring

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233 the office to consult with regional rural community
234 liaison centers on development of a certain strategic
235 plan; requiring rural liaisons to assist rural
236 communities with providing feedback in applying for
237 federal grants for broadband Internet services;
238 requiring the office to submit reports with specified
239 information to the Governor and the Legislature within
240 certain timeframes; repealing s. 290.06561, F.S.,
241 relating to designation of rural enterprise zones as
242 catalyst sites; amending s. 319.32, F.S.; revising the
243 disposition of fees collected for certain title
244 certificates; amending s. 334.044, F.S.; revising the
245 powers and duties of the Department of Transportation;
246 amending s. 339.0801, F.S.; revising the allocation of
247 funds received in the State Transportation Trust Fund;
248 amending s. 339.2816, F.S.; requiring, rather than
249 authorizing, that certain funds received from the
250 State Transportation Trust Fund be used for the Small
251 County Road Assistance Program; requiring the
252 department to use other additional revenues for the
253 Small County Road Assistance Program; providing an
254 exception from the prohibition against funding
255 capacity improvements on county roads; amending s.
256 339.2818, F.S.; deleting a provision that the funds
257 allocated under the Small County Outreach Program are
258 in addition to the Small County Road Assistance
259 Program; deleting a provision that a local government
260 within the Everglades Agricultural Area, the Peace
261 River Basin, or the Suwannee River Basin may compete

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262 for additional funding; conforming provisions to
263 changes made by the act; making a technical change;
264 amending s. 339.68, F.S.; providing legislative
265 findings; creating the Florida Arterial Road
266 Modernization Program within the Department of
267 Commerce; defining the term "rural community";
268 requiring the department to allocate from the State
269 Transportation Trust Fund a minimum sum in each fiscal
270 year to fund the program; providing that such funding
271 is in addition to any other funding provided to the
272 program; providing criteria the department must use to
273 prioritize projects for funding under the program;
274 requiring the department to submit a report to the
275 Governor and the Legislature by a specified date;
276 requiring that such report be submitted every 2 years
277 thereafter; providing the criteria for such report;
278 requiring the Department of Transportation to allocate
279 additional funds to implement the Small County Road
280 Assistance Program and amend the tentative work
281 program for a specified number of fiscal years;
282 requiring the department to submit a budget amendment
283 before the adoption of the work program; requiring the
284 department to allocate sufficient funds to implement
285 the Florida Arterial Road Modernization Program;
286 requiring the department to amend the current
287 tentative work program for a specified number of
288 fiscal years to include the program's projects;
289 requiring the department to submit a budget amendment
290 before the implementation of the program; requiring

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291 that the revenue increases in the State Transportation
292 Trust Fund which are derived from the act be used to
293 fund the work program; creating s. 381.403, F.S.;

294 providing legislative findings; creating the Rural
295 Access to Primary and Preventive Care Grant Program
296 within the Department of Health for a specified
297 purpose; defining terms; requiring the department to
298 award grants under the program to physicians and
299 autonomous advanced practice registered nurses
300 intending to open new practices or practice locations
301 in qualifying rural areas; specifying eligibility
302 criteria for the grants; requiring the department, by
303 a specified date, to create an application process for
304 applying for grants under the program; specifying
305 requirements for the application and application
306 process; authorizing the department, subject to
307 specific appropriation, to award grants under the
308 program; specifying limitations on the awarding of
309 grants; specifying expenses for which grant funds are
310 authorized and prohibited; requiring the department to
311 enter into a contract with each grant recipient;
312 specifying requirements for the contracts; authorizing
313 the department to adopt rules; requiring the
314 department, beginning on a specified date and annually
315 thereafter, to provide a report containing specified
316 information to the Governor and the Legislature;
317 providing for future legislative review and repeal of
318 the program; creating s. 381.9856, F.S.; creating the
319 Stroke, Cardiac, and Obstetric Response and Education

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320 Grant Program within the Department of Health;
321 specifying the purpose of the program; defining terms;
322 requiring the department to award grants under the
323 program to certain entities meeting specified
324 criteria; requiring the department to give priority to
325 certain applicants; limiting individual grants to a
326 specified amount per year; requiring grant recipients
327 to submit quarterly reports to the department;
328 requiring the department to monitor program
329 implementation and outcomes; requiring the department
330 to submit an annual report to the Governor and the
331 Legislature by a specified date; authorizing the
332 department to adopt rules; providing construction;
333 providing for future legislative review and repeal of
334 the program; amending s. 395.6061, F.S.; providing
335 that rural hospital capital grant improvement program
336 funding may be awarded to rural hospitals to establish
337 mobile care units and telehealth kiosks for specified
338 purposes; defining terms; amending s. 420.9073, F.S.;
339 revising the calculation of guaranteed amounts
340 distributed from the Local Government Housing Trust
341 Fund; reenacting and amending s. 420.9075, F.S.;
342 authorizing a certain percentage of the funds made
343 available in each county and eligible municipality
344 from the local housing distribution to be used to
345 preserve multifamily affordable rental housing;
346 specifying what such funds may be used for; providing
347 an expiration; amending s. 1001.451, F.S.; revising
348 the services required to be provided by regional

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349 consortium service organizations when such services
350 are found to be necessary and appropriate by such
351 organizations' boards of directors; revising the
352 allocation that certain regional consortium service
353 organizations are eligible to receive from the General
354 Appropriations Act; requiring each regional consortium
355 service organization to submit an annual report to the
356 Department of Education; requiring that unexpended
357 amounts in certain funds be carried forward; requiring
358 each regional consortium service organization to
359 provide quarterly financial reports to member
360 districts; requiring member districts to designate a
361 district to serve as a fiscal agent for certain
362 purposes; providing for compensation of the fiscal
363 agent district; requiring regional consortium service
364 organizations to retain all funds received from grants
365 or contracted services to cover indirect or
366 administrative costs associated with the provision of
367 such services; requiring the regional consortium
368 service organization board of directors to determine
369 products and services provided by the organization;
370 requiring a regional consortium service organization
371 board of directors to recommend the establishment of
372 positions and appointments to a fiscal agent district;
373 requiring that personnel be employed under specified
374 personnel policies; authorizing the regional
375 consortium service organization board of directors to
376 recommend a salary schedule for personnel; authorizing
377 regional consortium service organizations to purchase

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378 or lease property and facilities essential to their
379 operations; providing for the distribution of revenue
380 if a regional consortium service organization is
381 dissolved; deleting a provision requiring applications
382 for incentive grants; authorizing regional consortium
383 service organization boards of directors to contract
384 to provide services to nonmember districts; requiring
385 that a fund balance be established for specified
386 purposes; deleting a requirement for the use of
387 certain funds; authorizing a regional consortium
388 service organization to administer a specified
389 program; creating s. 1001.4511, F.S.; creating the
390 Regional Consortia Service Organization Supplemental
391 Services Program; providing the purpose of the
392 program; authorizing funds to be used for specified
393 purposes; requiring each regional consortium service
394 organization to report the distribution of funds
395 annually to the Legislature; providing for the
396 carryforward of funds; providing appropriations;
397 creating s. 1009.635, F.S.; establishing the Rural
398 Incentive for Professional Educators Program within
399 the Department of Education; requiring the program to
400 provide financial assistance for the repayment of
401 student loans to eligible participants who establish
402 permanent residency and employment in rural
403 communities; providing that eligible participants may
404 receive up to a certain amount in total student loan
405 repayment assistance over a certain timeframe;
406 requiring the department to verify certain information

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407 of participants in the program before it disburses
408 awards; providing that the program is administered
409 through the Office of Student Financial Assistance
410 within the department; requiring the department to
411 develop procedures and monitor compliance; requiring
412 the State Board of Education to adopt rules by a
413 certain date; amending s. 1013.62, F.S.; revising the
414 calculation methodology to determine the amount of
415 revenue that a school district must distribute to each
416 eligible charter school; amending s. 1013.64, F.S.;
417 revising conditions under which a school district may
418 receive funding on an approved construction project;
419 providing appropriations for specified purposes;
420 amending ss. 163.3187, 212.205, 257.191, 257.193,
421 265.283, 288.11621, 288.11631, 443.191, 571.26, and
422 571.265, F.S.; conforming cross-references and
423 provisions to changes made by the act; reenacting s.
424 288.9935(8), F.S., relating to the Microfinance
425 Guarantee Program, to incorporate the amendment made
426 to s. 20.60, F.S., in a reference thereto; reenacting
427 ss. 125.0104(5)(c), 193.624(3), 196.182(2), 218.12(1),
428 218.125(1), 218.135(1), 218.136(1), 252.35(2)(cc),
429 288.102(4), 403.064(16)(g), 589.08(2) and (3), and
430 1011.62(1)(f), F.S., relating to authorized uses of
431 tourist development tax; applicability of assessments
432 of renewable energy source devices; application of
433 exemptions of renewable energy source devices;
434 appropriations to offset reductions in ad valorem tax
435 revenue in fiscally constrained counties; offset for

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436 tax loss associated with certain constitutional
437 amendments affecting fiscally constrained counties;
438 offset for tax loss associated with reductions in
439 value of certain citrus fruit packing and processing
440 equipment; offset for ad valorem revenue loss
441 affecting fiscally constrained counties; Division of
442 Emergency Management powers; one-to-one match
443 requirement under the Supply Chain Innovation Grant
444 Program; applicability of provisions related to reuse
445 of reclaimed water; land acquisition restrictions; and
446 funds for operation of schools, respectively, to
447 incorporate the amendment made to s. 218.67, F.S., in
448 references thereto; reenacting s. 403.0741(6)(c),
449 F.S., relating to grease waste removal and disposal,
450 to incorporate the amendments made to ss. 218.67 and
451 339.2818, F.S., in references thereto; reenacting s.
452 163.3177(7)(e), F.S., relating to required and
453 optional elements of comprehensive plans and studies
454 and surveys, to incorporate the amendment made to s.
455 288.0656, F.S., in a reference thereto; reenacting s.
456 288.9962(7)(a), F.S., relating to the Broadband
457 Opportunity Program, to incorporate the amendment made
458 to s. 288.9961, F.S., in a reference thereto;
459 reenacting s. 215.211(1), F.S., relating to service
460 charges and elimination or reduction for specified
461 proceeds, to incorporate the amendment made to s.
462 319.32, F.S., in a reference thereto; reenacting s.
463 339.66(5) and (6), F.S., relating to upgrades of
464 arterial highways with controlled access facilities,

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465 to incorporate the amendment made to s. 339.68, F.S.,
466 in references thereto; reenacting ss. 420.9072(4) and
467 (6), 420.9076(7)(b), and 420.9079(2), F.S., relating
468 to the State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program,
469 adoption of affordable housing incentive strategies
470 and committees, and the Local Government Housing Trust
471 Fund, respectively, to incorporate the amendment made
472 to s. 420.9073, F.S., in references thereto; providing
473 an effective date.

474

475 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

476

477 Section 1. Paragraph (a) of subsection (3) and paragraph
478 (c) of subsection (10) of section 20.60, Florida Statutes, are
479 amended to read:

480 20.60 Department of Commerce; creation; powers and duties.—

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

482 Department of Commerce are established:

483 1. The Division of Economic Development.

484 2. The Division of Community Development.

485 3. The Division of Workforce Services.

486 4. The Division of Finance and Administration.

487 5. The Division of Information Technology.

488 6. The Office of the Secretary.

489 7. The Office of Rural Prosperity.

490 8.7- The Office of Economic Accountability and

491 Transparency, which shall:

492 a. Oversee the department's critical objectives as

493 determined by the secretary and make sure that the department's

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494 key objectives are clearly communicated to the public.

495 b. Organize department resources, expertise, data, and
496 research to focus on and solve the complex economic challenges
497 facing the state.

498 c. Provide leadership for the department's priority issues
499 that require integration of policy, management, and critical
500 objectives from multiple programs and organizations internal and
501 external to the department; and organize and manage external
502 communication on such priority issues.

503 d. Promote and facilitate key department initiatives to
504 address priority economic issues and explore data and identify
505 opportunities for innovative approaches to address such economic
506 issues.

507 e. Promote strategic planning for the department.

508 (10) The department shall, by November 1 of each year,
509 submit an annual report to the Governor, the President of the
510 Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives on the
511 condition of the business climate and economic development in
512 the state.

513 (c) The report must incorporate annual reports of other
514 programs, including:

515 1. A detailed report of the performance of the Black
516 Business Loan Program and a cumulative summary of quarterly
517 report data required under s. 288.714.

518 2. ~~The Rural Economic Development Initiative established~~
519 ~~under s. 288.0656.~~

520 ~~3.~~ A detailed report of the performance of the Florida
521 Development Finance Corporation and a summary of the
522 corporation's report required under s. 288.9610.

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523 ~~3.4~~ Information provided by Space Florida under s.
524 331.3051 and an analysis of the activities and accomplishments
525 of Space Florida.

526 Section 2. Subsection (5) is added to section 163.3168,
527 Florida Statutes, to read:

528 163.3168 Planning innovations and technical assistance.—

529 (5) When selecting applications for funding for technical
530 assistance, the state land planning agency shall give preference
531 to local governments located in a rural area of opportunity as
532 defined in s. 288.0656. The state land planning agency shall
533 consult with the Office of Rural Prosperity when awarding
534 funding pursuant to this section.

535 Section 3. Paragraph (i) is added to subsection (4) of
536 section 201.15, Florida Statutes, to read:

537 201.15 Distribution of taxes collected.—All taxes collected
538 under this chapter are hereby pledged and shall be first made
539 available to make payments when due on bonds issued pursuant to
540 s. 215.618 or s. 215.619, or any other bonds authorized to be
541 issued on a parity basis with such bonds. Such pledge and
542 availability for the payment of these bonds shall have priority
543 over any requirement for the costs of collection and enforcement
544 under this section. Before distribution pursuant to this
545 section, the Department of Revenue shall deduct amounts
546 necessary to pay the costs of the collection and enforcement of
547 the tax levied by this chapter. The costs may not be levied
548 against any portion of taxes pledged to debt service on bonds to
549 the extent that the costs are required to pay any amounts
550 relating to the bonds. All of the costs of the collection and
551 enforcement of the tax levied by this chapter shall be available

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552 and transferred to the extent necessary to pay debt service and
553 any other amounts payable with respect to bonds authorized
554 before January 1, 2017, secured by revenues distributed pursuant
555 to this section. All taxes remaining after deduction of costs
556 shall be distributed as follows:

557 (4) After the required distributions to the Land
558 Acquisition Trust Fund pursuant to subsections (1) and (2), the
559 lesser of 8 percent of the remainder or \$150 million in each
560 fiscal year shall be paid into the State Treasury to the credit
561 of the State Housing Trust Fund and shall be expended pursuant
562 to s. 420.50871. If 8 percent of the remainder is greater than
563 \$150 million in any fiscal year, the difference between 8
564 percent of the remainder and \$150 million shall be paid into the
565 State Treasury to the credit of the General Revenue Fund. The
566 remainder shall be distributed as follows:

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

571 Section 4. Paragraph (c) of subsection (2) of section
572 202.18, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

573 202.18 Allocation and disposition of tax proceeds.—The
574 proceeds of the communications services taxes remitted under
575 this chapter shall be treated as follows:

576 (2) The proceeds of the taxes remitted under s.
577 202.12(1)(b) shall be allocated as follows:

578 (c)1. After the distribution required under paragraph (b),
579 70 percent of the remainder ~~During each calendar year, the~~
580 ~~remaining portion of the proceeds~~ shall be transferred to the

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581 Local Government Half-cent Sales Tax Clearing Trust Fund.
582 ~~Seventy percent of such proceeds shall be~~ and allocated in the
583 same proportion as the allocation of total receipts of the half-
584 cent sales tax under s. 218.61 and the emergency distribution
585 under s. 218.65 in the prior state fiscal year. Thirty percent
586 of the remainder ~~of such proceeds~~ shall be transferred to the
587 General Revenue Fund ~~distributed pursuant to s. 218.67.~~

588 2. The proportion of the proceeds allocated based on the
589 emergency distribution under s. 218.65 shall be distributed
590 pursuant to s. 218.65.

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

596 4. The department shall distribute the appropriate amount
597 to each municipality and county each month at the same time that
598 local communications services taxes are distributed pursuant to
599 subsection (3).

600 Section 5. Paragraph (d) of subsection (6) of section
601 212.20, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

602 212.20 Funds collected, disposition; additional powers of
603 department; operational expense; refund of taxes adjudicated
604 unconstitutionally collected.—

605 (6) Distribution of all proceeds under this chapter and ss.
606 202.18(1)(b) and (2)(b) and 203.01(1)(a)3. is as follows:

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

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

616 2. After the distribution under subparagraph 1., 8.9744
617 percent of the amount remitted by a sales tax dealer located
618 within a participating county pursuant to s. 218.61 shall be
619 transferred into the Local Government Half-cent Sales Tax
620 Clearing Trust Fund. Beginning July 1, 2003, the amount to be
621 transferred shall be reduced by 0.1 percent, and the department
622 shall distribute this amount to the Public Employees Relations
623 Commission Trust Fund less \$5,000 each month, which shall be
624 added to the amount calculated in subparagraph 3. and
625 distributed accordingly.

626 3. After the distribution under subparagraphs 1. and 2.,
627 0.0966 percent shall be transferred to the Local Government
628 Half-cent Sales Tax Clearing Trust Fund and distributed pursuant
629 to s. 218.65.

630 4. After the distributions under subparagraphs 1., 2., and
631 3., 2.0810 percent of the available proceeds shall be
632 transferred monthly to the Revenue Sharing Trust Fund for
633 Counties pursuant to s. 218.215.

634 5. After the distributions under subparagraphs 1., 2., and
635 3., 1.3653 percent of the available proceeds shall be
636 transferred monthly to the Revenue Sharing Trust Fund for
637 Municipalities pursuant to s. 218.215. If the total revenue to
638 be distributed pursuant to this subparagraph is at least as

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639 great as the amount due from the Revenue Sharing Trust Fund for
640 Municipalities and the former Municipal Financial Assistance
641 Trust Fund in state fiscal year 1999-2000, no municipality shall
642 receive less than the amount due from the Revenue Sharing Trust
643 Fund for Municipalities and the former Municipal Financial
644 Assistance Trust Fund in state fiscal year 1999-2000. If the
645 total proceeds to be distributed are less than the amount
646 received in combination from the Revenue Sharing Trust Fund for
647 Municipalities and the former Municipal Financial Assistance
648 Trust Fund in state fiscal year 1999-2000, each municipality
649 shall receive an amount proportionate to the amount it was due
650 in state fiscal year 1999-2000.

651 6. After the distributions required under subparagraphs 1.-
652 5., the greater of \$50 million or 0.1438 percent of the
653 available proceeds shall be transferred to fiscally constrained
654 counties pursuant to s. 218.67.

655 7. Of the remaining proceeds:

656 a. In each fiscal year, the sum of \$29,915,500 shall be
657 divided into as many equal parts as there are counties in the
658 state, and one part shall be distributed to each county. The
659 distribution among the several counties must begin each fiscal
660 year on or before January 5th and continue monthly for a total
661 of 4 months. If a local or special law required that any moneys
662 accruing to a county in fiscal year 1999-2000 under the then-
663 existing provisions of s. 550.135 be paid directly to the
664 district school board, special district, or a municipal
665 government, such payment must continue until the local or
666 special law is amended or repealed. The state covenants with
667 holders of bonds or other instruments of indebtedness issued by

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668 local governments, special districts, or district school boards
669 before July 1, 2000, that it is not the intent of this
670 subparagraph to adversely affect the rights of those holders or
671 relieve local governments, special districts, or district school
672 boards of the duty to meet their obligations as a result of
673 previous pledges or assignments or trusts entered into which
674 obligated funds received from the distribution to county
675 governments under then-existing s. 550.135. This distribution
676 specifically is in lieu of funds distributed under s. 550.135
677 before July 1, 2000.

678 b. The department shall distribute \$166,667 monthly to each
679 applicant certified as a facility for a new or retained
680 professional sports franchise pursuant to s. 288.1162. Up to
681 \$41,667 shall be distributed monthly by the department to each
682 certified applicant as defined in s. 288.11621 for a facility
683 for a spring training franchise. However, not more than \$416,670
684 may be distributed monthly in the aggregate to all certified
685 applicants for facilities for spring training franchises.
686 Distributions begin 60 days after such certification and
687 continue for not more than 30 years, except as otherwise
688 provided in s. 288.11621. A certified applicant identified in
689 this sub-subparagraph may not receive more in distributions than
690 expended by the applicant for the public purposes provided in s.
691 288.1162(5) or s. 288.11621(3).

692 c. The department shall distribute up to \$83,333 monthly to
693 each certified applicant as defined in s. 288.11631 for a
694 facility used by a single spring training franchise, or up to
695 \$166,667 monthly to each certified applicant as defined in s.
696 288.11631 for a facility used by more than one spring training

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697 franchise. Monthly distributions begin 60 days after such
698 certification or July 1, 2016, whichever is later, and continue
699 for not more than 20 years to each certified applicant as
700 defined in s. 288.11631 for a facility used by a single spring
701 training franchise or not more than 25 years to each certified
702 applicant as defined in s. 288.11631 for a facility used by more
703 than one spring training franchise. A certified applicant
704 identified in this sub-subparagraph may not receive more in
705 distributions than expended by the applicant for the public
706 purposes provided in s. 288.11631(3).

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

709 e.(I) On or before July 25, 2021, August 25, 2021, and
710 September 25, 2021, the department shall distribute \$324,533,334
711 in each of those months to the Unemployment Compensation Trust
712 Fund, less an adjustment for refunds issued from the General
713 Revenue Fund pursuant to s. 443.131(3)(e)3. before making the
714 distribution. The adjustments made by the department to the
715 total distributions shall be equal to the total refunds made
716 pursuant to s. 443.131(3)(e)3. If the amount of refunds to be
717 subtracted from any single distribution exceeds the
718 distribution, the department may not make that distribution and
719 must subtract the remaining balance from the next distribution.

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

723 (III) If the ending balance of the Unemployment
724 Compensation Trust Fund exceeds \$4,071,519,600 on the last day
725 of any month, as determined from United States Department of the

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726 Treasury data, the Office of Economic and Demographic Research
727 shall certify to the department that the ending balance of the
728 trust fund exceeds such amount.

729 (IV) This sub-subparagraph is repealed, and the department
730 shall end monthly distributions under sub-sub-subparagraph (II),
731 on the date the department receives certification under sub-sub-
732 subparagraph (III).

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

737 ~~8.7.~~ All other proceeds must remain in the General Revenue
738 Fund.

739 Section 6. Paragraph (h) of subsection (1) of section
740 215.971, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

741 215.971 Agreements funded with federal or state
742 assistance.—

743 (1) An agency agreement that provides state financial
744 assistance to a recipient or subrecipient, as those terms are
745 defined in s. 215.97, or that provides federal financial
746 assistance to a subrecipient, as defined by applicable United
747 States Office of Management and Budget circulars, must include
748 all of the following:

749 (h)1. If the agency agreement provides federal or state
750 financial assistance to a county or municipality that is a rural
751 community or rural area of opportunity as those terms are
752 defined in s. 288.0656(2), a provision allowing the agency to
753 provide for the payment of invoices to the county, municipality,
754 or rural area of opportunity as that term is defined in s.

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755 288.0656(2), for verified and eligible performance that has been
756 completed in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth
757 in the agreement. This provision is not intended to require
758 reimbursement to the county, municipality, or rural area of
759 opportunity for invoices paid, but to allow the agency to
760 provide for the payment of invoices due. The agency shall
761 expedite such payment requests in order to facilitate the timely
762 payment of invoices received by the county, municipality, or
763 rural area of opportunity. This provision is included to
764 alleviate the financial hardships that certain rural counties
765 and municipalities encounter when administering agreements, and
766 must be exercised by the agency when a county or municipality
767 demonstrates financial hardship, to the extent that federal or
768 state law, rule, or other regulation allows such payments. This
769 paragraph may not be construed to alter or limit any other
770 provisions of federal or state law, rule, or other regulation.

771 2. By August 1, 2026, and each year thereafter, each state
772 agency shall report to the Office of Rural Prosperity
773 summarizing the implementation of this paragraph for the
774 preceding fiscal year. The Office of Rural Prosperity shall
775 summarize the information received pursuant to this paragraph in
776 its annual report as required in s. 288.013.

777 Section 7. Section 218.67, Florida Statutes, is amended to
778 read:

779 218.67 Distribution for fiscally constrained counties.—

780 (1) Each county ~~that is entirely within a rural area of~~
781 ~~opportunity as designated by the Governor pursuant to s.~~
782 ~~288.0656 or each county~~ for which the value of a mill will raise
783 no more than \$10 ~~\$5~~ million in revenue, based on the taxable

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784 value certified pursuant to s. 1011.62(4)(a)1.a., from the
785 previous July 1, shall be considered a fiscally constrained
786 county.

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

794 (3) The amount to be distributed to each fiscally
795 constrained county shall be determined by the Department of
796 Revenue at the beginning of the fiscal year, using the prior
797 fiscal year's sales and use tax collections ~~July 1 taxable value~~
798 ~~certified pursuant to s. 1011.62(4)(a)1.a., tax data~~, population
799 as defined in s. 218.21, and the most current calendar year per
800 capita personal income published by the Bureau of Economic
801 Analysis of the United States Department of Commerce ~~millage~~
802 ~~rate levied for the prior fiscal year~~. The amount distributed
803 shall be allocated based upon the following factors:

804 (a) The contribution-to-revenue ~~relative revenue-raising~~
805 ~~capacity~~ factor for each participating county shall equal 100
806 multiplied by a quotient, the numerator of which is the county's
807 population and the denominator of which is the state sales and
808 use tax collections attributable to the county ~~be the ability of~~
809 ~~the eligible county to generate ad valorem revenues from 1 mill~~
810 ~~of taxation on a per capita basis. A county that raises no more~~
811 ~~than \$25 per capita from 1 mill shall be assigned a value of 1;~~
812 ~~a county that raises more than \$25 but no more than \$30 per~~

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813 ~~capita from 1 mill shall be assigned a value of 0.75; and a~~
814 ~~county that raises more than \$30 but no more than \$50 per capita~~
815 ~~from 1 mill shall be assigned a value of 0.5. No value shall be~~
816 ~~assigned to counties that raise more than \$50 per capita from 1~~
817 ~~mill of ad valorem taxation.~~

818 (b) The personal-income local effort factor shall equal a
819 quotient, the numerator of which is the median per capita
820 personal income of participating counties and the denominator of
821 which is the county's per capita personal income ~~be a measure of~~
822 ~~the relative level of local effort of the eligible county as~~
823 ~~indicated by the millage rate levied for the prior fiscal year.~~
824 ~~The local effort factor shall be the most recently adopted~~
825 ~~countywide operating millage rate for each eligible county~~
826 ~~multiplied by 0.1.~~

827 (c) Each eligible county's proportional allocation of the
828 total amount available to be distributed to all of the eligible
829 counties shall be in the same proportion as the sum of the
830 county's two factors is to the sum of the two factors for all
831 eligible counties. The proportional rate computation must be
832 carried to the fifth decimal place, and the amount to distribute
833 to each county must be rounded to the next whole dollar amount.
834 The counties that are eligible to receive an allocation under
835 this subsection and the amount available to be distributed to
836 such counties do ~~shall~~ not include counties participating in the
837 phaseout period under subsection (4) or the amounts they remain
838 eligible to receive during the phaseout.

839 (4) For those counties that no longer qualify under the
840 requirements of subsection (1) after the effective date of this
841 act, there shall be a 2-year phaseout period. Beginning on July

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842 1 of the year following the year in which the value of a mill
843 for that county exceeds \$10 ~~\$5~~ million in revenue, the county
844 shall receive two-thirds of the amount received in the prior
845 year, and beginning on July 1 of the second year following the
846 year in which the value of a mill for that county exceeds \$10 ~~\$5~~
847 million in revenue, the county shall receive one-third of the
848 amount received in the last year that the county qualified as a
849 fiscally constrained county. Following the 2-year phaseout
850 period, the county is ~~shall~~ no longer ~~be~~ eligible to receive any
851 distributions under this section unless the county can be
852 considered a fiscally constrained county as provided in
853 subsection (1).

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

857 1. Fifty percent may be used for public safety, including
858 salary expenditures for law enforcement officers or correctional
859 officers, as those terms are defined in s. 943.10(1) and (2),
860 respectively, firefighters as defined in s. 633.102, or
861 emergency medical technicians or paramedics as those terms are
862 defined in s. 401.23.

863 2. Thirty percent may be used for infrastructure needs.

864 3. Twenty percent may be expended for any public purpose.

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

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

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871 288.0001 Economic Development Programs Evaluation.—The
872 Office of Economic and Demographic Research and the Office of
873 Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA)
874 shall develop and present to the Governor, the President of the
875 Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the
876 chairs of the legislative appropriations committees the Economic
877 Development Programs Evaluation.

878 (6) (a) The Office of Economic and Demographic Research and
879 OPPAGA shall prepare a report on the impact of the Florida
880 Statutes on rural communities. Specifically, the report must
881 include the following:

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

888 a. Evaluation of whether current provisions properly
889 distinguish these communities or areas from more urban and
890 suburban parts of this state;

891 b. Consideration of updates to the definitions and
892 references to classify additional rural areas, such as growing
893 communities, unincorporated areas, or rural communities by
894 design; and

895 c. Study of appropriate metrics to be used to describe
896 rural communities or areas, such as population, geographic,
897 demographic, or other metrics, or combinations thereof.

898 2. A survey of local governments meeting the statutory
899 definition of "rural community" or "rural area of opportunity"

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900 to assess the benefits to the local government of being
901 identified as such and any perceived unmet needs in the
902 implementation of current statutory provisions designed to
903 support rural communities or areas.

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

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

914 (c) The Office of Economic and Demographic Research and
915 OPPAGA shall submit a report to the President of the Senate and
916 the Speaker of the House of Representatives by December 31,
917 2025. The report must provide recommendations to address any
918 findings, including any changes in statutory definitions or
919 references to rural communities or areas, opportunities to
920 enhance state support to rural communities or areas, outcome
921 measures or other criteria that may be used to examine the
922 effectiveness of state grant programs for rural communities or
923 areas, and adjustments to program design, including changes to
924 increase participation in state grant programs for rural
925 communities or areas.

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

927 Section 9. Present paragraphs (d) and (e) of subsection (7)
928 of section 288.001, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as

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929 paragraphs (e) and (f), respectively, and a new paragraph (d) is
930 added to that subsection, to read:

931 288.001 The Florida Small Business Development Center
932 Network.—

933 (7) ADDITIONAL STATE FUNDS; USES; PAY-PER-PERFORMANCE
934 INCENTIVES; STATEWIDE SERVICE; SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS; BEST
935 PRACTICES; ELIGIBILITY.—

936 (d) Notwithstanding paragraphs (a), (b), and (c), the
937 network shall use funds directly appropriated for the specific
938 purpose of expanding service in rural communities, as defined in
939 s. 288.0656, in addition to any funds allocated by the network
940 from other sources. The network shall use the funds to develop
941 an activity plan focused on network consultants and resources in
942 rural communities. In collaboration with regional economic
943 development organizations as defined in s. 288.018, the plan
944 must provide for either full- or part-time consultants to be
945 available for at least 20 hours per week in rural areas or be
946 permanently stationed in rural areas. This may include
947 establishing a circuit in specific rural locations to ensure the
948 consultants' availability on a regular basis. By using the funds
949 to create a regular presence in rural areas, the network can
950 strengthen community collaboration, raise awareness of available
951 resources to provide opportunities for new business development
952 or existing business growth, and make professional experience,
953 education, and business information available in these essential
954 communities. The network may dedicate funds to facilitate local
955 or regional events that focus on small business topics, provide
956 consulting services, and leverage partner organizations, such as
957 the regional economic development organizations, local workforce

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958 development boards as described in s. 445.07, and Florida
959 College System institutions.

960 Section 10. Section 288.007, Florida Statutes, is amended
961 to read:

962 288.007 Inventory of communities seeking to recruit
963 businesses.—By September 30 of each year, a county or
964 municipality that has a population of at least 25,000 or its
965 local economic development organization, and each local
966 government within a rural area of opportunity as defined in s.
967 288.0656 or its local economic development organization, shall
968 ~~must~~ submit to the department a brief overview of the strengths,
969 services, and economic development incentives that its community
970 offers. The local government or its local economic development
971 organization also shall ~~must~~ identify any industries that it is
972 encouraging to locate or relocate to its area. Unless otherwise
973 required pursuant to this section, a county or municipality
974 having a population of 25,000 or less ~~fewer~~ or its local
975 economic development organization seeking to recruit businesses
976 may submit information as required in this section and may
977 participate in any activity or initiative resulting from the
978 collection, analysis, and reporting of the information to the
979 department pursuant to this section.

980 Section 11. Section 288.013, Florida Statutes, is created
981 to read:

982 288.013 Office of Rural Prosperity.—

983 (1) The Legislature finds that the unique characteristics
984 and nature of the rural communities in this state are integral
985 to making this state an attractive place to visit, work, and
986 live. Further, the Legislature finds that building a prosperous

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987 rural economy and vibrant rural communities is in the best
988 interest of this state. Rural prosperity is integral to
989 supporting this state's infrastructure, housing, and
990 agricultural and food-processing needs, as well as promoting the
991 health and advancement of the overall economy of this state. It
992 is of importance to the state that its rural areas are able to
993 grow, whether locally or in regional partnerships. To better
994 serve rural communities, and in recognition of rural Florida's
995 unique challenges and opportunities, the Office of Rural
996 Prosperity is established to ensure these efforts are
997 coordinated, focused, and effective.

998 (2) The Office of Rural Prosperity is created within the
999 Department of Commerce for the purpose of supporting rural
1000 communities by helping rural stakeholders navigate available
1001 programs and resources and representing rural interests across
1002 state government.

1003 (3) The Governor shall appoint a director to lead the
1004 office, subject to confirmation by the Senate. The director
1005 shall report to the secretary of the department and shall serve
1006 at the pleasure of the secretary.

1007 (4) The office shall do all of the following:

1008 (a) Serve as the state's point of contact for rural local
1009 governments.

1010 (b) Administer the Rural Economic Development Initiative
1011 ("REDI") pursuant to s. 288.0656.

1012 (c) Provide training and technical assistance to rural
1013 local governments on a broad range of community and economic
1014 development activities. The training and technical assistance
1015 may be offered using communications technology or in person and

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1016 must be recorded and posted to the office's website. The
1017 training and technical assistance must include, at a minimum,
1018 the following topics:

1019 1. How to access state and federal resources, including
1020 training on the online rural resource directory required under
1021 paragraph (d).

1022 2. Best practices relating to comprehensive planning,
1023 economic development, and land development in rural communities.

1024 3. Strategies to address management and administrative
1025 capacity challenges unique to rural local governments.

1026 4. Requirements of, and updates on recent changes to, the
1027 Community Planning Act under s. 163.3161.

1028 5. Updates on other recent state and federal laws affecting
1029 rural local governments.

1030 (d) Create and maintain an online rural resource directory
1031 to serve as an interactive tool to navigate the various state
1032 and federal resources, tools, and services available to rural
1033 local governments. The office shall regularly maintain the
1034 resource directory and, to the greatest extent possible, include
1035 up-to-date information on state and federal programs, resources,
1036 tools, and services that address the needs of rural communities
1037 in all areas of governance. Each state agency shall routinely
1038 provide information and updates to the office for maintenance of
1039 the resource directory. The resource directory must allow users
1040 to search by indicators, such as agency name, resource type, or
1041 topic, and include a notification function to allow users to
1042 receive alerts when new or modified resources are available. To
1043 the greatest extent possible, the resource directory must
1044 include information on financial match requirements for the

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1045 state and federal programs listed in the directory.

1046 (5) (a) By October 1, 2025, the office shall establish and
1047 staff seven regional rural community liaison centers across this
1048 state for the purpose of providing specialized in-person state
1049 support to local governments in rural areas of opportunity as
1050 defined in s. 288.0656. The department shall by rule divide this
1051 state into seven regions and assign a regional rural community
1052 liaison center to each region. Each liaison center shall support
1053 the local governments within its geographic territory and shall
1054 be staffed with at least two full-time department personnel. At
1055 a minimum, liaison centers shall have the following powers,
1056 duties, and functions:

1057 1. Work with local governments to plan and achieve goals
1058 for local or regional growth, economic development, and rural
1059 prosperity.

1060 2. Facilitate local government access to state and federal
1061 resources, such as grants, loans, and other aid or resources.

1062 3. Advise local governments on available waivers of program
1063 requirements, including financial match waivers or reductions,
1064 for projects using state or federal funds through the Rural
1065 Economic Development Initiative under s. 288.0656.

1066 4. Coordinate local government technical assistance needs
1067 with the department and other state or federal agencies.

1068 5. Promote model ordinances, policies, and strategies
1069 related to economic development.

1070 6. Assist local governments with regulatory and reporting
1071 compliance.

1072 (b) To the greatest extent possible, the regional rural
1073 community liaison centers shall coordinate with local and

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1074 regional governmental entities, regional economic development
1075 organizations as defined in s. 288.018, and other appropriate
1076 entities to establish a network to foster community-driven
1077 solutions that promote viable and sustainable rural communities.

1078 (c) The regional rural community liaison centers shall
1079 regularly engage with the Rural Economic Development Initiative
1080 established in s. 288.0656, and at least one staff member from
1081 each liaison center shall attend, either in person or by means
1082 of electronic communication, the monthly meetings required by s.
1083 288.0656(6)(c).

1084 (6) By December 1, 2025, and each year thereafter, the
1085 director of the office shall submit to the Administration
1086 Commission in the Executive Office of the Governor a written
1087 report describing the office's operations and accomplishments
1088 for the preceding year, inclusive of the Rural Economic
1089 Development Initiative report required by s. 288.0656(8). In
1090 consultation with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer
1091 Services, the office shall also include in the annual report
1092 recommendations for policies, programs, and funding to further
1093 support the needs of rural communities in this state. The office
1094 shall submit the annual report to the President of the Senate
1095 and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by December 1 of
1096 each year and publish the annual report on the office's website.
1097 The director shall present, in person at the next scheduled
1098 Administration Commission meeting, detailed information from the
1099 annual report required by this subsection.

1100 (7)(a) The Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government
1101 Accountability (OPPAGA) shall review the effectiveness of the
1102 office by December 15, 2026, and each year thereafter until

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1103 2028. Beginning in 2029, OPPAGA shall review and evaluate the
1104 office every 3 years and shall submit a report based on its
1105 findings. Each report must recommend policy and statutory
1106 modifications for consideration by the Legislature. OPPAGA shall
1107 submit each report to the President of the Senate and the
1108 Speaker of the House of Representatives pursuant to the
1109 schedule.

1110 (b) OPPAGA shall review strategies implemented by other
1111 states on rural community preservation, enhancement, and
1112 revitalization and report on their effectiveness and potential
1113 for implementation in this state. OPPAGA shall include its
1114 findings in its report to the President of the Senate and the
1115 Speaker of the House of Representatives by December 15, 2027,
1116 and every 3 years thereafter.

1117 (c)1. OPPAGA shall review each state-funded or state-
1118 administered grant and loan program available to local
1119 governments to:

1120 a. Identify any specified local government financial match
1121 requirements and whether any portion of a match may be waived or
1122 is required to be waived, pursuant to law, and programs where a
1123 financial match waiver may be appropriate for rural local
1124 government applicants, if not contemplated by law.

1125 b. Identify grant and loan application evaluation criteria,
1126 including scoring procedures, for programs that may be perceived
1127 to be overly burdensome for rural local government applicants,
1128 and whether special accommodations or preferences for rural
1129 local governments may be appropriate.

1130 2. OPPAGA shall produce a report based on its review and
1131 submit the report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker

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1132 of the House of Representatives by December 15, 2026. This
1133 paragraph expires June 30, 2027.

1134 Section 12. Section 288.014, Florida Statutes, is created
1135 to read:

1136 288.014 Renaissance Grants Program.—

1137 (1) The Legislature finds that it has traditionally
1138 provided programs to assist rural communities with economic
1139 development and enhance their ability to attract businesses and
1140 that, by providing that extra component of economic viability,
1141 rural communities are able to attract new businesses and grow
1142 existing ones. However, the Legislature finds that a subset of
1143 rural communities has decreased in population over the past
1144 decade, contributing to a decline in local business activity and
1145 economic development. The Legislature further finds that the
1146 state must transform its assistance to these specific rural
1147 communities to help them achieve a necessary precursor of
1148 economic viability. The Legislature further finds that the
1149 approach intended by the creation of renaissance grants is to
1150 focus on reversing the economic deterioration in rural
1151 communities by retaining and attracting residents by giving them
1152 a reason to stay, which is the impetus of natural economic
1153 growth, business opportunities, and increased quality of life.

1154 (2) The Office of Rural Prosperity within the department
1155 shall administer the Renaissance Grants Program to provide block
1156 grants to eligible counties. By October 1, 2025, the Office of
1157 Economic and Demographic Research shall certify to the Office of
1158 Rural Prosperity which counties are growth-impeded. For the
1159 purposes of this section, "growth-impeded" means a county that,
1160 as of the most recent population estimate, has had a declining

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1161 population over the last 10 years. After an initial
1162 certification, the Office of Economic and Demographic Research
1163 shall annually certify whether the county remains growth-
1164 impeded, until the county has 3 consecutive years of population
1165 growth. Upon such certification of population growth, the county
1166 is eligible to participate in the program for 1 additional year
1167 in order for the county to prepare for the end of block grant
1168 funding.

1169 (3) (a) Each participating county shall enter into an
1170 agreement with the Office of Rural Prosperity to receive the
1171 block grant. Each county has broad authority to design its
1172 specific plan to achieve population growth within the broad
1173 parameters identified in this section. The Office of Rural
1174 Prosperity may not determine the manner in which the county
1175 implements the block grant. However, regional rural community
1176 liaison center staff shall provide assistance in developing the
1177 county's plan, upon request.

1178 (b) Each participating county shall report annually to the
1179 Office of Rural Prosperity on activities undertaken,
1180 intergovernmental agreements entered into, and other information
1181 as required by the office.

1182 (c) Each participating county shall receive \$1 million from
1183 the funds appropriated to the program. Counties participating in
1184 the program shall make all attempts to limit expenses for
1185 administrative costs, consistent with the need for prudent
1186 management and accountability in the use of public funds. Each
1187 county may contribute other funds for block grant purposes,
1188 including local, state, or federal grant funds, or seek out in-
1189 kind or financial contributions from private or public sources

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1190 to assist in fulfilling the activities undertaken.

1191 (4) (a) A participating county shall hire and retain a
1192 renaissance coordinator and may use block grant funds for this
1193 purpose. The renaissance coordinator is responsible for:

1194 1. Ensuring that block grant funds are used as provided in
1195 this section;

1196 2. Coordinating with other local governments, school
1197 boards, Florida College System institutions, or other entities;
1198 and

1199 3. Reporting as necessary to the state, including
1200 information necessary pursuant to subsection (7).

1201 (b) The Office of Rural Prosperity regional rural community
1202 liaison center staff shall provide assistance, upon request, and
1203 training to the renaissance coordinator to ensure successful
1204 implementation of the block grant.

1205 (5) A participating county shall design a plan to make
1206 targeted investments in the community to achieve population
1207 growth and increase the economic vitality of the community. The
1208 plan must include the following key features for use of the
1209 state support:

1210 (a) Technology centers with extended hours located within
1211 schools or on school premises, administered by the local school
1212 board, for such schools which provide extended hours and support
1213 for access by students.

1214 (b) Facilities that colocate adult day care with child care
1215 facilities. The site-sharing facilities must be managed to also
1216 provide opportunities for direct interaction between generations
1217 and increase the health and well-being of both younger and older
1218 participants, reduce social isolation, and create cost and time

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1219 efficiencies for working family members. The regional rural
1220 community liaison center staff of the Office of Rural Prosperity
1221 shall assist the county, upon request, with bringing to the
1222 Rural Economic Development Initiative or directly to the
1223 appropriate state agency recommendations necessary to streamline
1224 any required state permits, licenses, regulations, or other
1225 requirements.

1226 (c) Technology labs managed in agreement with the nearest
1227 Florida College System institution or a career center as
1228 established under s. 1001.44. Repurposing vacant industrial
1229 sites or existing office space must be given priority in the
1230 selection of lab locations. Each local technology lab must be
1231 staffed and open for extended hours with the capacity to
1232 provide:

1233 1. Access to trainers and equipment necessary for users to
1234 earn various certificates or online degrees in technology;

1235 2. Hands-on assistance with applying for appropriate remote
1236 work opportunities; and

1237 3. Studio space with equipment for graduates and other
1238 qualifying residents to perform remote work that is based on the
1239 use of technology. Collaboration with community partners,
1240 including the local workforce development board as described in
1241 s. 445.007, to provide training opportunities, in-kind support
1242 such as transportation to and from the lab, financing of
1243 equipment for in-home use, or basic maintenance of such
1244 equipment is required.

1245 (6) In addition to the hiring of a renaissance coordinator,
1246 a participating county shall develop intergovernmental
1247 agreements for shared responsibilities with its municipalities,

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1248 school board, and Florida College System institution or career
1249 center and enter into necessary contracts with providers and
1250 community partners in order to implement the plan.

1251 (7) (a) Every 2 years, the Auditor General shall conduct an
1252 operational audit as defined in s. 11.45 of each county's grant
1253 activities, beginning in 2026.

1254 (b) On December 31, 2026, and every year thereafter, the
1255 Office of Economic and Demographic Research shall submit an
1256 annual report of renaissance block grant recipients by county to
1257 the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of
1258 Representatives. The report must provide key economic indicators
1259 that measure progress in altering longer-term trends in the
1260 county. The Office of Rural Prosperity shall provide the Office
1261 of Economic and Demographic Research with information as
1262 requested to complete the report.

1263 (8) Notwithstanding s. 216.301, funds appropriated for the
1264 purposes of this section are not subject to reversion.

1265 (9) This section expires June 30, 2040.

1266 Section 13. Section 288.0175, Florida Statutes, is created
1267 to read:

1268 288.0175 Public Infrastructure Smart Technology Grant
1269 Program.—

1270 (1) The Public Infrastructure Smart Technology Grant
1271 Program is established within the Office of Rural Prosperity
1272 within the department to fund and support the development of
1273 public infrastructure smart technology projects in communities
1274 located in rural areas of opportunity, subject to legislative
1275 appropriation.

1276 (2) As used in this section, the term:

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1277 (a) "Public infrastructure smart technology" means systems
1278 and applications that use connectivity, data analytics, and
1279 automation to improve public infrastructure by increasing
1280 efficiency, enhancing public services, and promoting sustainable
1281 development.

1282 (b) "Rural area of opportunity" has the same meaning as in
1283 s. 288.0656.

1284 (c) "Smart technology lead organization" means a not-for-
1285 profit corporation organized under s. 501(c)(3) of the Internal
1286 Revenue Code which has been in existence for at least 3 years
1287 and specializes in smart region planning.

1288 (3)(a) The Office of Rural Prosperity shall contract with
1289 one or more smart technology lead organizations to administer
1290 the grant program for the purpose of deploying public
1291 infrastructure smart technology in rural communities. In
1292 accordance with the terms required by the office, the smart
1293 technology lead organization shall provide grants to counties
1294 and municipalities located within a rural area of opportunity
1295 for public infrastructure smart technology projects.

1296 (b) The office's contract with a smart technology lead
1297 organization must specify the contract deliverables, including
1298 financial reports and other reports due the office, timeframes
1299 for achieving contractual obligations, and any other
1300 requirements the office determines are necessary. The contract
1301 must require the smart technology lead organization to do the
1302 following:

1303 1. Collaborate with counties and municipalities located in
1304 rural areas of opportunity to identify opportunities for local
1305 governments to institute cost-effective smart technology

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1306 solutions for improving public services and infrastructure.

1307 2. Provide technical assistance to counties and
 1308 municipalities located in rural areas of opportunity in
 1309 developing plans for public infrastructure smart technology
 1310 projects.

1311 3. Assist counties and municipalities located in rural
 1312 areas of opportunity in connecting with other communities,
 1313 companies, and other entities to leverage the impact of each
 1314 public infrastructure smart technology project.

1315 (4) The office shall include in its annual report required
 1316 by s. 288.013(6) a description of the projects funded under this
 1317 section.

1318 Section 14. Subsections (1), (2), and (4) of section
 1319 288.018, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1320 288.018 Regional Rural Development Grants Program.—

1321 (1)(a) For the purposes of this section, the term “regional
 1322 economic development organization” means an economic development
 1323 organization located in or contracted to serve a rural area of
 1324 opportunity, as defined in s. 288.0656 ~~s. 288.0656(2)(d)~~.

1325 (b) Subject to appropriation, the Office of Rural
 1326 Prosperity ~~department~~ shall establish a grant program to provide
 1327 funding to regional economic development organizations for the
 1328 purpose of building the professional capacity of those
 1329 organizations. Building the professional capacity of a regional
 1330 economic development organization includes hiring professional
 1331 staff to develop, deliver, and provide needed economic
 1332 development professional services, including technical
 1333 assistance, education and leadership development, marketing, and
 1334 project recruitment. Grants may also be used by a regional

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1335 economic development organization to provide technical
1336 assistance to local governments, local economic development
1337 organizations, and existing and prospective businesses.

1338 (c) A regional economic development organization may apply
1339 annually to the office ~~department~~ for a grant. The office
1340 ~~department~~ is authorized to approve, on an annual basis, grants
1341 to such regional economic development organizations. The office
1342 may award a maximum amount of \$50,000 in a year to maximum
1343 ~~amount an organization may receive in any year will be \$50,000,~~
1344 or \$250,000 each to for any three regional economic development
1345 organizations that serve an entire region of a rural area of
1346 opportunity designated pursuant to s. 288.0656(7) if they are
1347 recognized by the office ~~department~~ as serving such a region.

1348 (2) In approving the participants, the office ~~department~~
1349 shall require the following:

1350 (a) Documentation of official commitments of support from
1351 each of the units of local government represented by the
1352 regional organization.

1353 (b) Demonstration that the organization is in existence and
1354 actively involved in economic development activities serving the
1355 region.

1356 (c) Demonstration of the manner in which the organization
1357 is or will coordinate its efforts with those of other local and
1358 state organizations.

1359 (4) Except as otherwise provided in the General
1360 Appropriations Act, the department may expend up to \$750,000
1361 each fiscal year from funds appropriated ~~to the Rural Community~~
1362 ~~Development Revolving Loan Fund~~ for the purposes outlined in
1363 this section.

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1364 Section 15. Section 288.019, Florida Statutes, is amended
1365 to read:

1366 288.019 Rural considerations in grant review and evaluation
1367 processes; financial match waiver or reduction.-

1368 (1) Notwithstanding any other law, and to the fullest
1369 extent possible, each agency and organization ~~the member~~
1370 ~~agencies and organizations~~ of the Rural Economic Development
1371 Initiative (REDI) as defined in s. 288.0656 ~~s. 288.0656(6)(a)~~
1372 shall review:

1373 (a) All grant and loan application evaluation criteria and
1374 scoring procedures to ensure the fullest access for rural
1375 communities ~~counties~~ as defined in s. 288.0656 ~~s. 288.0656(2)~~ to
1376 resources available throughout the state; and

1377 (b) The financial match requirements for projects in rural
1378 communities.

1379 (2) ~~(1)~~ Each REDI agency and organization shall consider the
1380 impact on and ability of rural communities to meet and be
1381 competitive under such criteria, scoring, and requirements. Upon
1382 review, each REDI agency and organization shall ~~review all~~
1383 ~~evaluation and scoring procedures and develop~~ a proposal for
1384 modifications to those procedures which minimize the financial
1385 and resource impact to a rural community, including waiver or
1386 reduction of any required financial match requirements ~~impact of~~
1387 ~~a project within a rural area.~~

1388 (a) ~~(2)~~ Evaluation criteria and scoring procedures must
1389 provide for an appropriate ranking, when ranking is a component
1390 of the program, based on the proportionate impact that projects
1391 have on a rural area when compared with similar project impacts
1392 on an urban area. Additionally,

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1393 ~~(3)~~ evaluation criteria and scoring procedures must
1394 recognize the disparity of available fiscal resources for an
1395 equal level of financial support from an urban county or
1396 municipality and a rural county or municipality.

1397 ~~(a)~~ The evaluation criteria should weight contribution in
1398 proportion to the amount of funding available at the local
1399 level.

1400 (b) Match requirements must be waived or reduced for rural
1401 communities. When appropriate, an in-kind match must should be
1402 allowed and applied as a financial match when a rural community
1403 county is experiencing economic financial distress as defined in
1404 s. 288.0656 through elevated unemployment at a rate in excess of
1405 the state's average by 5 percentage points or because of the
1406 loss of its ad valorem base. Donations of land, though usually
1407 not recognized as an in-kind match, may be treated as such. As
1408 appropriate, each agency and organization that applies for or
1409 receives federal funding must request federal approval to waive
1410 or reduce the financial match requirements, if any, for projects
1411 in rural communities.

1412 ~~(3)(4)~~ For ~~existing programs~~, The proposal modified
1413 ~~evaluation criteria and scoring procedure~~ must be submitted
1414 ~~delivered~~ to the Office of Rural Prosperity department for
1415 distribution to the REDI agencies and organizations. The REDI
1416 agencies and organizations shall review and make comments and
1417 recommendations that. ~~Future rules, programs, evaluation~~
1418 ~~criteria, and scoring processes must be brought before a REDI~~
1419 ~~meeting for review, discussion, and recommendation to allow~~
1420 rural communities ~~counties~~ fuller access to the state's
1421 resources.

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1422 (4) Each REDI agency and organization shall ensure that
1423 related administrative rules or policies are modified, as
1424 necessary, to reflect the finalized proposal and that
1425 information about the authorized wavier or reduction is included
1426 in the online rural resource directory of the Office of Rural
1427 Prosperity required in s. 288.013(4) (d).

1428 (5) The rural liaison from the related regional district
1429 shall assist the rural community to make requests of waiver or
1430 reduction of match.

1431 Section 16. Subsection (3) is added to section 288.021,
1432 Florida Statutes, to read:

1433 288.021 Economic development liaison.—

1434 (3) When practicable, the staff member appointed as the
1435 economic development liaison shall also serve as the agency
1436 representative for the Rural Economic Development Initiative
1437 pursuant to s. 288.0656.

1438 Section 17. Section 288.065, Florida Statutes, is amended
1439 to read:

1440 288.065 Rural Community Development Revolving Loan Fund.—

1441 (1) The Rural Community Development Revolving Loan Fund
1442 Program is established within the Office of Rural Prosperity
1443 ~~department~~ to facilitate the use of existing federal, state, and
1444 local financial resources by providing local governments with
1445 financial assistance to further promote the economic viability
1446 of rural communities. These funds may be used to finance
1447 initiatives directed toward maintaining or developing the
1448 economic base of rural communities, especially initiatives
1449 addressing employment opportunities for residents of these
1450 communities.

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1451 (2) (a) The program shall provide for long-term loans, loan
 1452 guarantees, and loan loss reserves to units of local
 1453 governments, or economic development organizations substantially
 1454 underwritten by a unit of local government.7

1455 (b) For purposes of this section, the term "unit of local
 1456 government" means:

1457 1. A county ~~within counties~~ with a population ~~populations~~
 1458 of 75,000 or less. ~~fewer, or within any~~

1459 2. A county with a population of 125,000 or less ~~fewer~~
 1460 which is contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000 or
 1461 less. ~~fewer~~

1462 3. A municipality within a county described in subparagraph
 1463 1. or subparagraph 2.

1464 4. A county or municipality within a rural area of
 1465 opportunity.

1466
 1467 For purposes of this paragraph, population is determined in
 1468 accordance with the most recent official estimates pursuant to
 1469 s. 186.901 and must include those residing in incorporated and
 1470 unincorporated areas of a county, ~~based on the most recent~~
 1471 ~~official population estimate as determined under s. 186.901,~~
 1472 ~~including those residing in incorporated areas and those~~
 1473 ~~residing in unincorporated areas of the county, or to units of~~
 1474 ~~local government, or economic development organizations~~
 1475 ~~substantially underwritten by a unit of local government, within~~
 1476 ~~a rural area of opportunity.~~

1477 (c)(b) Requests for loans must ~~shall~~ be made by application
 1478 to the office ~~department~~. Loans must ~~shall~~ be made pursuant to
 1479 agreements specifying the terms and conditions agreed to between

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1480 the applicant and the department. The loans are ~~shall be~~ the
1481 legal obligations of the applicant.

1482 (d)~~(e)~~ All repayments of principal and interest shall be
1483 returned to the loan fund and made available for loans to other
1484 applicants. However, in a rural area of opportunity designated
1485 under s. 288.0656 ~~by the Governor~~, and upon approval by the
1486 office ~~department~~, repayments of principal and interest may be
1487 retained by the applicant if such repayments are dedicated and
1488 matched to fund regionally based economic development
1489 organizations representing the rural area of opportunity.

1490 (3) The office ~~department~~ shall manage the fund,
1491 establishing loan practices that must include, but are not
1492 limited to, procedures for establishing loan interest rates,
1493 uses of funding, application procedures, and application review
1494 procedures. The office has ~~department shall have~~ final approval
1495 authority for any loan under this section.

1496 (4) Notwithstanding ~~the provisions of~~ s. 216.301, funds
1497 appropriated for this loan fund may ~~purpose shall~~ not be subject
1498 to reversion.

1499 (5) The office shall include in its annual report required
1500 under s. 288.013 detailed information about the fund, including
1501 loans made during the previous fiscal year, loans active, loans
1502 terminated or repaid, and the amount of funds not obligated as
1503 of 14 days before the date the report is due.

1504 Section 18. Subsections (1), (2), and (3) of section
1505 288.0655, Florida Statutes, are amended, and subsection (6) is
1506 added to that section, to read:

1507 288.0655 Rural Infrastructure Fund.—

1508 (1) There is created within the Office of Rural Prosperity

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1509 ~~department~~ the Rural Infrastructure Fund to facilitate the
1510 planning, preparing, and financing of infrastructure projects in
1511 rural communities which will encourage job creation, capital
1512 investment, and the strengthening and diversification of rural
1513 economies by promoting tourism, trade, and economic development.

1514 (2) (a) Funds appropriated by the Legislature shall be
1515 distributed by the office ~~department~~ through grant programs that
1516 maximize the use of federal, local, and private resources,
1517 including, but not limited to, those available under the Small
1518 Cities Community Development Block Grant Program.

1519 (b) To facilitate access of rural communities and rural
1520 areas of opportunity as defined by the Rural Economic
1521 Development Initiative to infrastructure funding programs of the
1522 Federal Government, such as those offered by the United States
1523 Department of Agriculture and the United States Department of
1524 Commerce, and state programs, including those offered by Rural
1525 Economic Development Initiative agencies, and to facilitate
1526 local government or private infrastructure funding efforts, the
1527 office ~~department~~ may award grants for up to 75 percent of the
1528 total infrastructure project cost, or up to 100 percent of the
1529 total infrastructure project cost for a project located in a
1530 rural community as defined in s. 288.0656(2) which is also
1531 located in a fiscally constrained county as defined in s.
1532 218.67(1) or a rural area of opportunity as defined in s.
1533 288.0656(2). Eligible uses of funds may include improving any
1534 inadequate infrastructure that has resulted in regulatory action
1535 that prohibits economic or community growth and reducing the
1536 costs to community users of proposed infrastructure improvements
1537 that exceed such costs in comparable communities. Eligible uses

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1538 of funds include improvements to public infrastructure for
1539 industrial or commercial sites and upgrades to or development of
1540 public tourism infrastructure. Authorized infrastructure may
1541 include the following public or public-private partnership
1542 facilities: storm water systems; telecommunications facilities;
1543 roads or other remedies to transportation impediments; nature-
1544 based tourism facilities; or other physical requirements
1545 necessary to facilitate tourism, trade, and economic development
1546 activities in the community. Authorized infrastructure may also
1547 include publicly or privately owned self-powered nature-based
1548 tourism facilities, publicly owned telecommunications
1549 facilities, and additions to the distribution facilities of the
1550 existing natural gas utility as defined in s. 366.04(3)(c), the
1551 existing electric utility as defined in s. 366.02, or the
1552 existing water or wastewater utility as defined in s.
1553 367.021(12), or any other existing water or wastewater facility,
1554 which owns a gas or electric distribution system or a water or
1555 wastewater system in this state when:

1556 1. A contribution-in-aid of construction is required to
1557 serve public or public-private partnership facilities under the
1558 tariffs of any natural gas, electric, water, or wastewater
1559 utility as defined herein; and

1560 2. Such utilities as defined herein are willing and able to
1561 provide such service.

1562 (c) The office department may award grants of up to
1563 \$300,000 for infrastructure feasibility studies, design and
1564 engineering activities, or other infrastructure planning and
1565 preparation or site readiness activities. Site readiness
1566 expenses may include clearing title, surveys, permitting,

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1567 environmental studies, and regulatory compliance costs. Grants
1568 awarded under this paragraph may be used in conjunction with
1569 grants awarded under paragraph (b). In evaluating applications
1570 under this paragraph, the office ~~department~~ shall consider the
1571 extent to which the application seeks to minimize administrative
1572 and consultant expenses.

1573 (d) The office ~~department~~ shall participate in a memorandum
1574 of agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture
1575 under which state funds available through the Rural
1576 Infrastructure Fund may be advanced, in excess of the prescribed
1577 state share, for a project that has received from the United
1578 States Department of Agriculture a preliminary determination of
1579 eligibility for federal financial support. State funds in excess
1580 of the prescribed state share which are advanced pursuant to
1581 this paragraph and the memorandum of agreement shall be
1582 reimbursed when funds are awarded under an application for
1583 federal funding.

1584 (e) To enable local governments to access the resources
1585 available pursuant to s. 403.973(17), the office ~~department~~ may
1586 award grants for surveys, feasibility studies, and other
1587 activities related to the identification and preclearance review
1588 of land which is suitable for preclearance review. Authorized
1589 grants under this paragraph may not exceed \$75,000 each, except
1590 in the case of a project in a rural area of opportunity, in
1591 which case the grant may not exceed \$300,000. Any funds awarded
1592 under this paragraph must be matched at a level of 50 percent
1593 with local funds, except that any funds awarded for a project in
1594 a rural area of opportunity do not require a match of local
1595 funds. ~~If an application for funding is for a catalyst site, as~~

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1596 ~~defined in s. 288.0656, the requirement for local match may be~~
1597 ~~waived pursuant to the process in s. 288.06561.~~ In evaluating
1598 applications under this paragraph, the office ~~department~~ shall
1599 consider the extent to which the application seeks to minimize
1600 administrative and consultant expenses.

1601 (3) The office ~~department~~, in consultation with the
1602 Department of Transportation ~~Florida Tourism Industry Marketing~~
1603 ~~Corporation~~, the Department of Environmental Protection, and the
1604 Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, as
1605 appropriate, shall review and certify applications pursuant to
1606 s. 288.061. The review must include an evaluation of the
1607 economic benefit and long-term viability. The office has
1608 ~~department shall have~~ final approval for any grant under this
1609 section.

1610 (6) The office shall include in its annual report required
1611 under s. 288.013 detailed information about the fund, including
1612 grants made for the year, grants active, grants terminated or
1613 complete, and the amount of funds not obligated as of 14 days
1614 before the date the report is due.

1615 Section 19. Subsection (1), paragraphs (a), (b), and (e) of
1616 subsection (2), subsections (3) and (6), paragraph (c) of
1617 subsection (7), and subsection (8) of section 288.0656, Florida
1618 Statutes, are amended to read:

1619 288.0656 Rural Economic Development Initiative.—

1620 (1)(a) Recognizing that rural communities and regions
1621 continue to face extraordinary challenges in their efforts to
1622 significantly improve their economies, specifically in terms of
1623 personal income, job creation, average wages, and strong tax
1624 bases, it is the intent of the Legislature to encourage and

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1625 facilitate the location and expansion of major economic
1626 development projects of significant scale in such rural
1627 communities. The Legislature finds that rural communities are
1628 the essential conduits for the economy's distribution,
1629 manufacturing, and food supply.

1630 (b) The Rural Economic Development Initiative, known as
1631 "REDI," is created within the Office of Rural Prosperity
1632 department, and all the participation of state and regional
1633 agencies listed in paragraph (6) (a) shall participate in this
1634 initiative is authorized.

1635 (2) As used in this section, the term:

1636 ~~(a) "Catalyst project" means a business locating or~~
1637 ~~expanding in a rural area of opportunity to serve as an economic~~
1638 ~~generator of regional significance for the growth of a regional~~
1639 ~~target industry cluster. The project must provide capital~~
1640 ~~investment on a scale significant enough to affect the entire~~
1641 ~~region and result in the development of high wage and high skill~~
1642 ~~jobs.~~

1643 ~~(b) "Catalyst site" means a parcel or parcels of land~~
1644 ~~within a rural area of opportunity that has been prioritized as~~
1645 ~~a geographic site for economic development through partnerships~~
1646 ~~with state, regional, and local organizations. The site must be~~
1647 ~~reviewed by REDI and approved by the department for the purposes~~
1648 ~~of locating a catalyst project.~~

1649 (c)(e) "Rural community" means:

- 1650 1. A county with a population of 75,000 or less fewer.
- 1651 2. A county with a population of 125,000 or less fewer
1652 which is contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000 or
1653 less fewer.

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1654 3. A municipality within a county described in subparagraph
1655 1. or subparagraph 2.

1656 4. An unincorporated federal enterprise community or an
1657 incorporated rural city with a population of 25,000 or less
1658 ~~fewer~~ and an employment base focused on traditional agricultural
1659 or resource-based industries, located in a county not defined as
1660 rural, which has at least three or more of the economic distress
1661 factors identified in paragraph (a) ~~paragraph (e)~~ and verified
1662 by the department.

1663
1664 For purposes of this paragraph, population shall be determined
1665 in accordance with the most recent official estimate pursuant to
1666 s. 186.901.

1667 (3) REDI shall be responsible for coordinating and focusing
1668 the efforts and resources of state and regional agencies on the
1669 problems which affect the fiscal, economic, and community
1670 viability of Florida's ~~economically distressed~~ rural
1671 communities, working with local governments, community-based
1672 organizations, and private organizations that have an interest
1673 in the growth and development of these communities to find ways
1674 to balance environmental and growth management issues with local
1675 needs.

1676 (6) (a) By August 1 of each year, the head of each of the
1677 following agencies and organizations shall designate a deputy
1678 secretary or higher-level staff person from within the agency or
1679 organization to serve as the REDI representative for the agency
1680 or organization:

- 1681 1. The Department of Transportation.
- 1682 2. The Department of Environmental Protection.

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- 1683 3. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.
- 1684 4. The Department of State.
- 1685 5. The Department of Health.
- 1686 6. The Department of Children and Families.
- 1687 7. The Department of Corrections.
- 1688 8. The Department of Education.
- 1689 9. The Department of Juvenile Justice.
- 1690 10. The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.
- 1691 11. Each water management district.
- 1692 12. CareerSource Florida, Inc.
- 1693 13. VISIT Florida.
- 1694 14. The Florida Regional Planning Council Association.
- 1695 15. The Agency for Health Care Administration.
- 1696 16. The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS).
- 1697 (b) An alternate for each designee must ~~shall~~ also be
- 1698 chosen, who must also be a deputy secretary or higher-level
- 1699 staff person, and the names of the designees and alternates must
- 1700 ~~shall~~ be reported sent to the director of the Office of Rural
- 1701 Prosperity. At least one rural liaison from each regional rural
- 1702 community liaison center must participate in the REDI meetings
- 1703 ~~Secretary of Commerce.~~
- 1704 (c) REDI shall meet at least each month, but may meet more
- 1705 often as necessary. Each REDI representative, or his or her
- 1706 designee, shall be physically present or available by means of
- 1707 electronic communication for each meeting.
- 1708 (d) ~~(b)~~ Each REDI representative must have comprehensive
- 1709 knowledge of his or her agency's functions, both regulatory and
- 1710 service in nature, and of the state's economic goals, policies,
- 1711 and programs. This person shall be the primary point of contact

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1712 for his or her agency with REDI on issues and projects relating
1713 to ~~economically distressed~~ rural communities and with regard to
1714 expediting project review, shall ensure a prompt effective
1715 response to problems arising with regard to rural issues, and
1716 shall work closely with the other REDI representatives in the
1717 identification of opportunities for preferential awards of
1718 program funds, contractual or other agreement provisions which
1719 meet the requirements of s. 215.971, and allowances and waiver
1720 of program requirements when necessary to encourage and
1721 facilitate ~~long-term private~~ capital investment and job
1722 creation.

1723 (e) ~~(e)~~ The REDI representatives shall work with REDI in the
1724 review and evaluation of statutes and rules for adverse impact
1725 on rural communities and the development of alternative
1726 proposals to mitigate that impact.

1727 (f) ~~(d)~~ Each REDI representative shall be responsible for
1728 ensuring that each district office or facility of his or her
1729 agency is informed quarterly about the Rural Economic
1730 Development Initiative and for providing assistance throughout
1731 the agency in the implementation of REDI activities.

1732 (7)

1733 ~~(c) Each rural area of opportunity may designate catalyst~~
1734 ~~projects, provided that each catalyst project is specifically~~
1735 ~~recommended by REDI and confirmed as a catalyst project by the~~
1736 ~~department. All state agencies and departments shall use all~~
1737 ~~available tools and resources to the extent permissible by law~~
1738 ~~to promote the creation and development of each catalyst project~~
1739 ~~and the development of catalyst sites.~~

1740 (8) REDI shall submit a report to the Office of Rural

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1741 ~~Prosperity department~~ on all REDI activities for the previous
1742 fiscal year as a supplement to the office's ~~department's~~ annual
1743 report required under s. 288.013 ~~s. 20.60~~. This supplementary
1744 report must include:

1745 (a) A status report on every project ~~all projects~~ currently
1746 being coordinated through REDI, the number of preferential
1747 awards and allowances made pursuant to this section in detail by
1748 award, allowance, or match type, the dollar amount of such
1749 awards, and the names of the recipients.

1750 (b) A description of all waivers of program requirements
1751 granted, including a list by program of each waiver that was
1752 granted. If waivers were requested but were not granted, a list
1753 of ungranted waivers, including reasons why the waivers were not
1754 granted, must be included.

1755 (c) Detailed information as to the economic impact of the
1756 projects coordinated by REDI.

1757 (d) Recommendations based on the review and evaluation of
1758 statutes and rules having an adverse impact on rural communities
1759 and proposals to mitigate such adverse impacts.

1760 (e) Legislative recommendations for statutory waivers or
1761 reductions of specified economic development program
1762 requirements, including financial match waivers or reductions,
1763 for applicants within rural areas of opportunity.

1764 (f) Outcomes of proposals submitted pursuant to s. 288.019.
1765 Section 20. Section 288.06561, Florida Statutes, is
1766 repealed.

1767 Section 21. Subsections (2), (3), and (4) of section
1768 288.0657, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1769 288.0657 Florida rural economic development strategy

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1770 grants.-

1771 (2) The Office of Rural Prosperity shall provide ~~department~~
1772 ~~may accept and administer moneys appropriated to the department~~
1773 ~~for providing~~ grants to assist rural communities to develop and
1774 implement strategic economic development plans. Grants may be
1775 provided to assist with costs associated with marketing a site
1776 to business and site selectors for an economic development
1777 project that is part of an economic development plan, either as
1778 part of funding to develop and implement a plan or related to an
1779 already adopted plan.

1780 (3) A rural community, an economic development organization
1781 in a rural area, or a regional organization representing at
1782 least one rural community or such economic development
1783 organizations may apply for such grants. The rural liaison for
1784 the rural community shall assist those applying for such grants.

1785 (4) The office ~~department~~ shall establish criteria for
1786 reviewing grant applications. These criteria must ~~shall~~ include,
1787 but are not limited to, the degree of participation and
1788 commitment by the local community and the application's
1789 consistency with local comprehensive plans or the application's
1790 proposal to ensure such consistency. Grants for marketing may
1791 include funding for advertising campaign materials and costs
1792 associated with meetings, trade missions, and professional
1793 development affiliated with site preparation and marketing. The
1794 office ~~department~~ shall review each application for a grant. ~~The~~
1795 ~~department may approve grants only to the extent that funds are~~
1796 ~~appropriated for such grants by the Legislature.~~

1797 Section 22. Paragraph (f) of subsection (2) and paragraphs
1798 (a), (b), and (c) of subsection (4) of section 288.9961, Florida

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1799 Statutes, are amended, and subsections (6) and (7) are added to
1800 that section, to read:

1801 288.9961 Promotion of broadband adoption; Florida Office of
1802 Broadband.—

1803 (2) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:

1804 (f) “Underserved” means a geographic area of this state in
1805 which there is no provider of broadband Internet service that
1806 offers a connection to the Internet with a capacity for
1807 transmission at a consistent speed of at least 100 megabits per
1808 second downstream and at least 20 ~~10~~ megabits per second
1809 upstream.

1810 (4) FLORIDA OFFICE OF BROADBAND.—The Florida Office of
1811 Broadband is created within the Division of Community
1812 Development in the department for the purpose of developing,
1813 marketing, and promoting broadband Internet services in this
1814 state. The office, in the performance of its duties, shall do
1815 all of the following:

1816 (a) Create a strategic plan that has goals and strategies
1817 for increasing and improving the availability of, access to, and
1818 use of broadband Internet service in this state. In development
1819 of the plan, the department shall incorporate applicable federal
1820 broadband activities, including any efforts or initiatives of
1821 the Federal Communications Commission, to improve broadband
1822 Internet service in this state. The plan must identify available
1823 federal funding sources for the expansion or improvement of
1824 broadband. The strategic plan must be submitted to the Governor,
1825 the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of
1826 Representatives by June 30, 2022. The strategic plan must be
1827 updated biennially thereafter. The plan must include a process

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1828 to review and verify public input regarding transmission speeds
1829 and availability of broadband Internet service throughout this
1830 state. The office shall consult with each regional rural
1831 community liaison center within the Office of Rural Prosperity
1832 on the development and update of the plan.

1833 (b) Build and facilitate local technology planning teams or
1834 partnerships with members representing cross-sections of the
1835 community, which may include, but are not limited to,
1836 representatives from the following organizations and industries:
1837 libraries, K-12 education, colleges and universities, local
1838 health care providers, private businesses, community
1839 organizations, economic development organizations, local
1840 governments, tourism, parks and recreation, and agriculture. The
1841 local technology planning teams or partnerships shall work with
1842 rural communities to help the communities understand their
1843 current broadband availability, locate unserved and underserved
1844 businesses and residents, identify assets relevant to broadband
1845 deployment, build partnerships with broadband service providers,
1846 and identify opportunities to leverage assets and reduce
1847 barriers to the deployment of broadband Internet services in the
1848 community. The teams or partnerships must be proactive in rural
1849 communities as defined in s. 288.0656 ~~fiscally constrained~~
1850 ~~counties~~ in identifying and providing assistance, in
1851 coordination with the regional rural community liaison centers
1852 within the Office of Rural Prosperity, with applying for federal
1853 grants for broadband Internet service.

1854 (c) Provide technical and planning assistance to rural
1855 communities in coordination with the regional rural community
1856 liaison centers within the Office of Rural Prosperity.

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1857 (6) The office shall submit to the Governor, the President
1858 of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives a
1859 quarterly report detailing the implementation of broadband
1860 activities in rural, unserved, and underserved communities. Such
1861 information must be listed by county and include the amount of
1862 state and federal funds allocated and expended in the county by
1863 program; the progress toward deploying broadband in the county;
1864 any technical assistance provided; the activities of the local
1865 technology planning teams and partnerships; and the fulfillment
1866 of any other duties of the office required by this part.

1867 (7) By December 31 each year, the office shall submit to
1868 the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of
1869 the House of Representatives an annual report on the office's
1870 operations and accomplishments for that calendar year and the
1871 status of broadband Internet service access and use in this
1872 state. The report must also incorporate the quarterly reports on
1873 rural, unserved, and underserved communities required by
1874 subsection (6).

1875 Section 23. Section 290.06561, Florida Statutes, is
1876 repealed.

1877 Section 24. Paragraph (a) of subsection (5) of section
1878 319.32, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1879 319.32 Fees; service charges; disposition.—

1880 (5) (a) Forty-seven dollars of each fee collected, except
1881 for fees charged on a certificate of title for a motor vehicle
1882 for hire registered under s. 320.08(6), for each applicable
1883 original certificate of title and each applicable duplicate copy
1884 of a certificate of title shall be deposited as follows: ~~into~~
1885 ~~the State Transportation Trust Fund. Deposits to the State~~

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1886 ~~Transportation Trust Fund pursuant to this paragraph may not~~
 1887 ~~exceed \$200 million in any fiscal year, and from any collections~~
 1888 ~~in excess of that amount during the fiscal year,~~

1889 1. The first \$30 million collected shall be deposited into
 1890 the Highway Safety Operating Trust Fund; ~~and~~

1891 2. Any remaining collections shall be paid into the State
 1892 Transportation Trust General Revenue Fund.

1893 Section 25. Subsection (37) is added to section 334.044,
 1894 Florida Statutes, to read:

1895 334.044 Powers and duties of the department.—The department
 1896 shall have the following general powers and duties:

1897 (37) To provide technical assistance and support from the
 1898 appropriate district of the department to counties that are not
 1899 located in a metropolitan planning organization created pursuant
 1900 to s. 339.175.

1901 Section 26. Section 339.0801, Florida Statutes, is amended
 1902 to read:

1903 339.0801 Allocation of increased revenues derived from
 1904 amendments to s. 319.32(5)(a) ~~by ch. 2012-128.~~—

1905 (1) The first \$200 million of funds that result from
 1906 increased revenues to the State Transportation Trust Fund
 1907 derived from the amendments to s. 319.32(5)(a) made by s. 11,
 1908 chapter 2012-128, Laws of Florida, this act must be used
 1909 annually, first as set forth in paragraph (a) ~~subsection (1)~~ and
 1910 then as set forth in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) ~~subsections~~
 1911 ~~(2)–(4)~~, notwithstanding any other provision of law:

1912 (a)1.~~(1)~~(a) Beginning in the 2013-2014 fiscal year and
 1913 annually for 30 years thereafter, \$10 million shall be for the
 1914 purpose of funding any seaport project identified in the adopted

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1915 work program of the Department of Transportation, to be known as
1916 the Seaport Investment Program.

1917 2.~~(b)~~ The revenues may be assigned, pledged, or set aside
1918 as a trust for the payment of principal or interest on revenue
1919 bonds, or other forms of indebtedness issued by an individual
1920 port or appropriate local government having jurisdiction
1921 thereof, or collectively by interlocal agreement among any of
1922 the ports, or used to purchase credit support to permit such
1923 borrowings. Alternatively, revenue bonds shall be issued by the
1924 Division of Bond Finance at the request of the Department of
1925 Transportation under the State Bond Act and shall be secured by
1926 such revenues as are provided in this subsection.

1927 3.~~(e)~~ Revenue bonds or other indebtedness issued hereunder
1928 are not a general obligation of the state and are secured solely
1929 by a first lien on the revenues distributed under this
1930 subsection.

1931 4.~~(d)~~ The state covenants with holders of the revenue bonds
1932 or other instruments of indebtedness issued pursuant to this
1933 subsection that it will not repeal this subsection; nor take any
1934 other action, including but not limited to amending this
1935 subsection, that will materially and adversely affect the rights
1936 of such holders so long as revenue bonds or other indebtedness
1937 authorized by this subsection are outstanding.

1938 5.~~(e)~~ The proceeds of any revenue bonds or other
1939 indebtedness, after payment of costs of issuance and
1940 establishment of any required reserves, shall be invested in
1941 projects approved by the Department of Transportation and
1942 included in the department's adopted work program, by amendment
1943 if necessary. As required under s. 11(f), Art. VII of the State

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1944 Constitution, the Legislature approves projects included in the
1945 department's adopted work program, including any projects added
1946 to the work program by amendment under s. 339.135(7).

1947 6.~~(f)~~ Any revenues that are not used for the payment of
1948 bonds as authorized by this subsection may be used for purposes
1949 authorized under the Florida Seaport Transportation and Economic
1950 Development Program. This revenue source is in addition to any
1951 amounts provided for and appropriated in accordance with ss.
1952 311.07 and 320.20(3) and (4).

1953 (b)~~(2)~~ Beginning in the 2013-2014 fiscal year and annually
1954 thereafter, \$10 million shall be transferred to the
1955 Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund, to be used as specified
1956 in s. 427.0159.

1957 (c)~~(3)~~ Beginning in the 2013-2014 fiscal year and annually
1958 thereafter, \$10 million shall be allocated to the Small County
1959 Outreach Program to be used as specified in s. 339.2818. These
1960 funds are in addition to the funds provided for the program
1961 pursuant to s. 201.15(4)(a)2.

1962 (d)~~(4)~~ After the distributions required pursuant to
1963 paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) ~~subsections (1)-(3)~~, the remaining
1964 funds shall be used annually for transportation projects within
1965 this state for existing or planned strategic transportation
1966 projects which connect major markets within this state or
1967 between this state and other states, which focus on job
1968 creation, and which increase this state's viability in the
1969 national and global markets.

1970 (2) The remaining funds that result from increased revenue
1971 to the State Transportation Trust Fund derived pursuant to s.
1972 319.32(5)(a) must be used annually, notwithstanding any other

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1973 law, beginning in the 2025-2026 fiscal year and annually
 1974 thereafter, for the Small County Road Assistance Program as
 1975 prescribed in s. 339.2816.

1976 (3)(5) Pursuant to s. 339.135(7), the department shall
 1977 amend the work program to add the projects provided for in this
 1978 section.

1979 Section 27. Subsection (3) and paragraph (a) of subsection
 1980 (4) of section 339.2816, Florida Statutes, are amended, and
 1981 paragraph (c) of subsection (4) of that section is reenacted, to
 1982 read:

1983 339.2816 Small County Road Assistance Program.—

1984 (3) Beginning with fiscal year ~~1999-2000 until fiscal year~~
 1985 ~~2009-2010, and beginning again with fiscal year 2012-2013, up to~~
 1986 \$25 million annually from the State Transportation Trust Fund
 1987 must may be used for the purposes of funding the Small County
 1988 Road Assistance Program as described in this section. In
 1989 addition, beginning with fiscal year 2025-2026, the department
 1990 must use the additional revenues allocated by s. 339.0801 for
 1991 the Small County Road Assistance Program.

1992 (4)(a) Small counties shall be eligible to compete for
 1993 funds that have been designated for the Small County Road
 1994 Assistance Program for resurfacing or reconstruction projects on
 1995 county roads that were part of the county road system on June
 1996 10, 1995. Capacity improvements on county roads are shall not be
 1997 eligible for funding under the program unless a safety issue
 1998 exists or the department finds it necessary to widen existing
 1999 lanes as part of a resurfacing or reconstruction project.

2000 (c) The following criteria must be used to prioritize road
 2001 projects for funding under the program:

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2002 1. The primary criterion is the physical condition of the
 2003 road as measured by the department.

2004 2. As secondary criteria the department may consider:

2005 a. Whether a road is used as an evacuation route.

2006 b. Whether a road has high levels of agricultural travel.

2007 c. Whether a road is considered a major arterial route.

2008 d. Whether a road is considered a feeder road.

2009 e. Whether a road is located in a fiscally constrained
 2010 county, as defined in s. 218.67(1).

2011 f. Other criteria related to the impact of a project on the
 2012 public road system or on the state or local economy as
 2013 determined by the department.

2014 Section 28. Subsections (1), (2), (3), (6), (7), and (8) of
 2015 section 339.2818, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

2016 339.2818 Small County Outreach Program.—

2017 (1) There is created within the department ~~of~~
 2018 ~~Transportation~~ the Small County Outreach Program. The purpose of
 2019 this program is to assist small county governments in repairing
 2020 or rehabilitating county bridges, paving unpaved roads,
 2021 addressing road-related drainage improvements, resurfacing or
 2022 reconstructing county roads, or constructing capacity or safety
 2023 improvements to county roads.

2024 (2) For the purposes of this section, the term "small
 2025 county" means any county that has a population of 200,000 or
 2026 less as determined by the most recent official population census
 2027 determination ~~estimate~~ pursuant to s. 186.901.

2028 ~~(3) Funds allocated under this program, pursuant to s. 4,~~
 2029 ~~ch. 2000-257, Laws of Florida, are in addition to any funds~~
 2030 ~~provided pursuant to s. 339.2816, for the Small County Road~~

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2031 ~~Assistance Program.~~

2032 (5)~~(6)~~ Funds paid into the State Transportation Trust Fund
 2033 pursuant to ss. 201.15, 320.072, and 339.0801 ~~s. 201.15~~ for the
 2034 purposes of the Small County Outreach Program are hereby
 2035 annually appropriated for expenditure to support the Small
 2036 County Outreach Program.

2037 (6)~~(7)~~ Subject to a specific appropriation in addition to
 2038 funds annually appropriated for projects under this section, a
 2039 municipality within a rural area of opportunity or a rural area
 2040 of opportunity community designated under s. 288.0656(7)(a) may
 2041 compete for the additional project funding using the criteria
 2042 listed in subsection (3) ~~(4)~~ at up to 100 percent of project
 2043 costs, excluding capacity improvement projects.

2044 ~~(8) Subject to a specific appropriation in addition to~~
 2045 ~~funds appropriated for projects under this section, a local~~
 2046 ~~government either wholly or partially within the Everglades~~
 2047 ~~Agricultural Area as defined in s. 373.4592(15), the Peace River~~
 2048 ~~Basin, or the Suwannee River Basin may compete for additional~~
 2049 ~~funding using the criteria listed in paragraph (4)(c) at up to~~
 2050 ~~100 percent of project costs on state or county roads used~~
 2051 ~~primarily as farm-to-market connections between rural~~
 2052 ~~agricultural areas and market distribution centers, excluding~~
 2053 ~~capacity improvement projects.~~

2054 Section 29. Section 339.68 is amended to read:

2055 (Substantial rewording of section.

2056 See s. 339.68, F.S., for present text.)

2057 339.68 Florida Arterial Road Modernization Program.—

2058 (1) The Legislature finds that increasing demands continue
 2059 to be placed on rural arterial roads in this state by a fast-

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2060 growing economy, continued population growth, and increased
2061 tourism. Investment in the rural arterial roads of this state is
2062 needed to maintain the safety, mobility, reliability, and
2063 resiliency of the transportation system in order to support the
2064 movement of people, goods, and commodities; to enhance economic
2065 prosperity and competitiveness; and to enrich the quality of
2066 life of the rural communities and the environment of this state.

2067 (2) The Florida Arterial Road Modernization Program is
2068 created within the department to make capacity and safety
2069 improvements to two-lane arterial roads located in rural
2070 communities. For purposes of this section, the term "rural
2071 community" has the same meaning as provided in s. 288.0656.

2072 (3) Beginning in the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the department
2073 shall allocate from the State Transportation Trust Fund a
2074 minimum of \$50 million in each fiscal year for purposes of
2075 funding the program. This funding is in addition to any other
2076 funding provided to the program by any other law.

2077 (4) The department shall use the following criteria to
2078 prioritize projects for funding under the program:

2079 (a) Whether the road has documented safety concerns or
2080 requires additional safety and design improvements. This may be
2081 evidenced by the number of fatalities or crashes per vehicle
2082 mile traveled.

2083 (b) Whether the road has or is projected to have a
2084 significant amount of truck tractor traffic as determined by the
2085 department. For purposes of this paragraph, the term "truck
2086 tractor" has the same meaning as in s. 320.01(11).

2087 (c) Whether the road is used to transport agricultural
2088 products and commodities from the farm to the market or other

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2089 sale or distribution point.

2090 (d) Whether the road is used to transport goods to or from
2091 warehouses, distribution centers, or intermodal logistics
2092 centers as defined in s. 311.101(2).

2093 (e) Whether the road is used as an evacuation route.

2094 (f) Whether the physical condition of the road meets
2095 department standards.

2096 (g) Whether the road currently has, or is projected to have
2097 within the next 5 years, a level of service of D, E, or F.

2098 (h) Any other criteria related to the impact of a project
2099 on the public road system or on the state or local economy as
2100 determined by the department.

2101 (5) By January 1, 2027, and every 2 years thereafter, the
2102 department shall submit to the Governor, the President of the
2103 Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives a report
2104 regarding the use and condition of arterial roads located in
2105 rural communities, which report must include the following:

2106 (a) A map of roads located in rural communities which are
2107 designated as arterial roads.

2108 (b) A needs assessment that must include, but is not
2109 limited to, consideration of infrastructure improvements to
2110 improve capacity on arterial roads in rural communities.

2111 (c) A synopsis of the department's project prioritization
2112 process.

2113 (d) An estimate of the local and state economic impact of
2114 improving capacity on arterial roads in rural communities.

2115 (e) A listing of the arterial roads and the associated
2116 improvements to be included in the program and a schedule or
2117 timeline for the inclusion of such projects in the work program.

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2118 Section 30. (1) The Department of Transportation shall
2119 allocate the additional funds provided by this act to implement
2120 the Small County Road Assistance Program as created by s.
2121 339.2816 and amend the current tentative work program for the
2122 2025-2026 through 2031-2032 fiscal years to include additional
2123 projects. In addition, before adoption of the work program, the
2124 department shall submit a budget amendment pursuant to s.
2125 339.135(7), Florida Statutes, requesting budget authority
2126 necessary to implement the additional projects.

2127 (2) The department shall allocate sufficient funds to
2128 implement the Florida Arterial Road Modernization Program,
2129 develop a plan to expend the revenues as specified in s. 339.68,
2130 Florida Statutes, and, before its adoption, amend the current
2131 tentative work program for the 2025-2026 through 2031-2032
2132 fiscal years to include the program's projects. In addition,
2133 before adoption of the work program, the department shall submit
2134 a budget amendment pursuant to s. 339.135(7), Florida Statutes,
2135 requesting budget authority necessary to implement the program
2136 as specified in s. 339.68, Florida Statutes.

2137 (3) Notwithstanding any other law, the increase in revenue
2138 to the State Transportation Trust Fund derived from the
2139 amendments to ss. 201.15 and 319.32, Florida Statutes, made by
2140 this act and deposited into the trust fund pursuant to ss.
2141 201.15 and 339.0801, Florida Statutes, shall be used by the
2142 department to fund the programs as specified in this section.

2143 Section 31. Section 381.403, Florida Statutes, is created
2144 to read:

2145 381.403 Rural Access to Primary and Preventive Care Grant
2146 Program.—The Legislature recognizes that access to primary and

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2147 preventive health care is critical for the well-being of the
2148 residents of this state. The Legislature also recognizes that
2149 many rural areas of this state have significantly fewer
2150 available physicians and autonomous advanced practice registered
2151 nurses who serve those areas. To increase the availability of
2152 health care in such underserved rural areas, there is created
2153 the Rural Access to Primary and Preventive Care Grant Program
2154 within the Department of Health to use grants to incentivize
2155 physicians and autonomous advanced practice registered nurses to
2156 open or expand practices in those areas.

2157 (1) As used in this section, the term:

2158 (a) "Autonomous advanced practice registered nurse" means
2159 an advanced practice registered nurse who is registered under s.
2160 464.0123 to engage in autonomous practice.

2161 (b) "Majority ownership" means ownership of more than 50
2162 percent of the interests in a private practice.

2163 (c) "Physician" means a physician licensed under chapter
2164 458 or chapter 459.

2165 (d) "Preventive care" means routine health care services
2166 designed to prevent illness. The term includes, but is not
2167 limited to, general physical examinations provided on an annual
2168 basis, screenings for acute or chronic illnesses, and patient
2169 counseling to promote overall wellness and avoid the need for
2170 emergency services.

2171 (e) "Primary care" means health care services focused
2172 primarily on preventive care, wellness care, and treatment for
2173 common illnesses. The term may include the health care provider
2174 serving as a patient's entry point into the overall health care
2175 system and coordinating a patient's care among specialists or

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2176 acute care settings. The term does not include elective services
2177 provided solely for cosmetic purposes.

2178 (f) "Program" means the Rural Access to Primary and
2179 Preventive Care Grant Program.

2180 (g) "Qualifying rural area" means a rural community as
2181 defined in s. 288.0657 in this state which is also designated as
2182 a health professional shortage area by the Health Resources and
2183 Services Administration of the United States Department of
2184 Health and Human Services.

2185 (2) The department shall award grants under the program to
2186 physicians and autonomous advanced practice registered nurses
2187 who intend to open a new private practice in a qualifying rural
2188 area or who intend to open a new location within a qualifying
2189 rural area if the current private practice is located in a
2190 different county. To qualify for a grant, an applicant must meet
2191 all of the following criteria:

2192 (a) The practice must:

2193 1. Have majority ownership by physicians or autonomous
2194 advanced practice registered nurses. Majority ownership may
2195 include up to five physicians or autonomous advanced practice
2196 registered nurses in partnership.

2197 2. Be physically located in a qualifying rural area and
2198 serve at that location patients who live in that qualifying
2199 rural area or in other nearby qualifying rural areas. While the
2200 practice may use telehealth to supplement the services provided
2201 at the location, the majority of services provided by the
2202 practice must be provided at the physical location.

2203 3. Accept Medicaid patients.

2204 4. Provide services in one or more of the following

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2205 specialties:

2206 a. If the practice has majority ownership by one or more
2207 autonomous advanced practice registered nurses, provide services
2208 solely in primary or preventive care.

2209 b. If the practice has majority ownership by one or more
2210 physicians, provide services in primary care, obstetrics,
2211 gynecology, general and family practice, geriatrics, internal
2212 medicine, pediatrics, or psychiatry.

2213 (b) The owners of the practice must commit to providing the
2214 following information to the department on an annual basis, and
2215 upon request by the department:

2216 1. Deidentified patient encounter data.

2217 2. A detailed report on the use of grant funds until such
2218 funds are expended.

2219 (3) By March 1, 2026, the department shall create an
2220 application process for eligible physicians and autonomous
2221 advanced practice registered nurses to apply for grants under
2222 the program. The application must require a detailed budget of
2223 anticipated use of grant funds and how the new or existing
2224 practice will meet the requirements of subsection (2). The
2225 department shall establish a ranking system to determine which
2226 applicants will be awarded grants if there are more applicants
2227 for the program than can be awarded grants with available
2228 appropriated funds.

2229 (4) Subject to specific appropriation, the department may
2230 award grants of up to \$250,000 to eligible applicants. Only one
2231 grant may be awarded per practice. Grant funds awarded for
2232 establishing a new private practice or a new practice location
2233 may be used for any of the following expenses:

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- 2234 (a) Facility construction, acquisition, renovation, or
2235 lease.
- 2236 (b) Purchasing medical equipment.
- 2237 (c) Purchasing or implementing information technology
2238 equipment or services.
- 2239 (d) Purchasing or implementing telehealth technology.
- 2240 (e) Training on the use of medical equipment, information
2241 technology, or telehealth technology implemented under paragraph
2242 (b), paragraph (c), or paragraph (d), respectively.
- 2243 (5) Grant funds may not be used for any of the following:
- 2244 (a) Salaries.
- 2245 (b) Utilities.
- 2246 (c) Internet or telecommunications services other than
2247 those necessary for implementing telehealth technology under
2248 paragraph (4) (d).
- 2249 (d) Insurance.
- 2250 (e) Incidental maintenance and repairs.
- 2251 (f) Disposable medical supplies.
- 2252 (g) Medicines or vaccines.
- 2253 (h) Licensing or certification fees, including costs for
2254 continuing education other than training under paragraph (4) (e).
- 2255 (6) The department shall enter into a contract with each
2256 grant recipient which details the requirements for the
2257 expenditure of grant funds for that recipient. The contract must
2258 include, at a minimum, all of the following:
- 2259 (a) The purpose of the contract.
- 2260 (b) Specific performance standards and responsibilities for
2261 the recipient under the contract, including penalties for not
2262 meeting such performance standards and responsibilities.

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- 2263 (c) A detailed project or contract budget, if applicable.
- 2264 (d) Reporting requirements for grant recipients to provide
2265 information to the department under paragraph (2)(b) as well as
2266 any additional information the department deems necessary for
2267 the administration of the program.
- 2268 (7) The department may adopt rules to implement the
2269 program.
- 2270 (8) Beginning July 1, 2026, and each year thereafter in
2271 which there are outstanding contracts with grant recipients
2272 under subsection (6), the department shall provide a report to
2273 the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of
2274 the House of Representatives which includes, but need not be
2275 limited to, all of the following:
- 2276 (a) Each grant awarded, including the proposed uses for
2277 each grant.
- 2278 (b) The progress on each outstanding contract.
- 2279 (c) The number of patients residing in rural areas who were
2280 served by grant awardees.
- 2281 (d) The number of Medicaid recipients who were served by
2282 grant awardees.
- 2283 (e) The number and types of services provided during
2284 patient encounters in locations opened under the program.
- 2285 (f) The number of health care practitioners, delineated by
2286 licensure type, providing services in locations opened under the
2287 program.
- 2288 (9) This section is repealed July 1, 2035, unless reviewed
2289 and saved from repeal through reenactment by the Legislature.
- 2290 Section 32. Section 381.9856, Florida Statutes, is created
2291 to read:

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2292 381.9856 Stroke, Cardiac, and Obstetric Response and
2293 Education Grant Program.—

2294 (1) PROGRAM CREATION.—The Stroke, Cardiac, and Obstetric
2295 Response and Education (SCORE) Grant Program is created within
2296 the Department of Health.

2297 (2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the program is to improve
2298 patient outcomes and the coordination of emergency medical care
2299 in rural communities by increasing access to high-quality
2300 stroke, cardiac, and obstetric care through the application of
2301 technology and innovative training, such as blended learning
2302 training programs. Blended learning training programs ensure
2303 that participants gain both the theoretical foundations of
2304 diagnosis and management as well as real-world clinical
2305 experience through scenario-based learning, ultimately enhancing
2306 decisionmaking and patient outcomes.

2307 (3) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:

2308 (a) “Blended learning training program” means a structured
2309 educational model that uses blended learning methodologies,
2310 including simulation-based training, virtual reality, and
2311 distance learning technologies, in conjunction with hands-on
2312 instruction, such as simulation-based practice, and in-person
2313 skills sessions to provide comprehensive education.

2314 (b) “High-risk care provider” means a licensed health care
2315 facility or licensed ambulance service that regularly provides
2316 emergency or ongoing care to patients experiencing a stroke,
2317 heart attack, or pregnancy-related emergency.

2318 (c) “Rural community” has the same meaning as provided in
2319 s. 288.0657.

2320 (4) GRANT PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—

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2321 (a) The department shall award grants to high-risk care
2322 providers serving rural communities to accomplish at least one
2323 of the following initiatives:

2324 1. Implement a blended learning training program for health
2325 care providers in stroke care protocols and best practices.

2326 2. Purchase simulation equipment and technology for
2327 training.

2328 3. Establish telehealth capabilities between prehospital
2329 providers, such as paramedics or emergency medical technicians,
2330 and in-hospital providers, such as neurologists, to expedite
2331 emergency stroke care, emergency cardiac care, or emergency
2332 obstetric care.

2333 4. Develop quality improvement programs in one or more of
2334 the following specialty areas: emergency stroke care, emergency
2335 cardiac care, or emergency obstetric care.

2336 (b) Priority must be given to proposals that:

2337 1. Demonstrate collaboration between prehospital and in-
2338 hospital providers; or

2339 2. Show potential for significant improvement in patient
2340 outcomes in rural communities.

2341 (5) FUNDING LIMITS; REPORTING.—

2342 (a) Individual grants may not exceed \$100,000 per year.

2343 (b) Grant recipients must submit quarterly reports to the
2344 department documenting program activities, expenditures, and
2345 outcomes.

2346 (6) ADMINISTRATION.—The department shall monitor program
2347 implementation and outcomes. The department shall submit an
2348 annual report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and
2349 the Speaker of the House of Representatives by December 1 of

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2350 each year, detailing program implementation and outcomes.

2351 (7) RULEMAKING.—The department may adopt rules to implement
2352 this section.

2353 (8) IMPLEMENTATION.—This section may be implemented only to
2354 the extent specifically funded by legislative appropriation.

2355 (9) REPEAL.—This section is repealed July 1, 2030, unless
2356 reviewed and saved from repeal through reenactment by the
2357 Legislature.

2358 Section 33. Subsection (2) of section 395.6061, Florida
2359 Statutes, is amended to read:

2360 395.6061 Rural hospital capital improvement.—There is
2361 established a rural hospital capital improvement grant program.

2362 (2) (a) Each rural hospital as defined in s. 395.602 shall
2363 receive a minimum of \$100,000 annually, subject to legislative
2364 appropriation, upon application to the Department of Health, for
2365 projects to acquire, repair, improve, or upgrade systems,
2366 facilities, or equipment. Such projects may include, but are not
2367 limited to, the following:

2368 1. Establishing mobile care units to provide primary care
2369 services, behavioral health services, or obstetric and
2370 gynecological services in rural health professional shortage
2371 areas.

2372 2. Establishing telehealth kiosks to provide urgent care
2373 and primary care services remotely in rural health professional
2374 shortage areas.

2375 (b) As used in this subsection, the term:

2376 1. "Preventive care" means routine health care services
2377 designed to prevent illness. The term includes, but is not
2378 limited to, general physical examinations provided on an annual

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2379 basis, screenings for acute or chronic illnesses, and patient
2380 counseling to promote overall wellness and avoid the need for
2381 emergency services.

2382 2. "Primary care" means health care services focused
2383 primarily on preventive care, wellness care, and treatment for
2384 common illnesses. The term may include the health care provider
2385 serving as a patient's entry point into the overall health care
2386 system and coordinating a patient's care among specialists or
2387 acute care settings. The term does not include elective services
2388 provided solely for cosmetic purposes.

2389 3. "Rural health professional shortage area" means a rural
2390 community as defined in s. 288.0657 which is also designated as
2391 a health professional shortage area by the Health Resources and
2392 Services Administration of the United States Department of
2393 Health and Human Services.

2394 Section 34. Subsection (3) of section 420.9073, Florida
2395 Statutes, is amended to read:

2396 420.9073 Local housing distributions.—

2397 (3) Calculation of guaranteed amounts:

2398 (a) The guaranteed amount under subsection (1) shall be
2399 calculated for each state fiscal year by multiplying \$1 million
2400 ~~\$350,000~~ by a fraction, the numerator of which is the amount of
2401 funds distributed to the Local Government Housing Trust Fund
2402 pursuant to s. 201.15(4)(c) and the denominator of which is the
2403 total amount of funds distributed to the Local Government
2404 Housing Trust Fund pursuant to s. 201.15.

2405 (b) The guaranteed amount under subsection (2) shall be
2406 calculated for each state fiscal year by multiplying \$1 million
2407 ~~\$350,000~~ by a fraction, the numerator of which is the amount of

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2408 funds distributed to the Local Government Housing Trust Fund
2409 pursuant to s. 201.15(4) (d) and the denominator of which is the
2410 total amount of funds distributed to the Local Government
2411 Housing Trust Fund pursuant to s. 201.15.

2412 Section 35. Paragraph (n) of subsection (5) of section
2413 420.9075, Florida Statutes, is amended, paragraph (o) is added
2414 to that subsection, and paragraph (b) of subsection (13) of that
2415 section is reenacted, to read:

2416 420.9075 Local housing assistance plans; partnerships.—

2417 (5) The following criteria apply to awards made to eligible
2418 sponsors or eligible persons for the purpose of providing
2419 eligible housing:

2420 (n) Funds from the local housing distribution not used to
2421 meet the criteria established in paragraph (a), ~~or~~ paragraph
2422 (c), or paragraph (o), or not used for the administration of a
2423 local housing assistance plan must be used for housing
2424 production and finance activities, including, but not limited
2425 to, financing preconstruction activities or the purchase of
2426 existing units, providing rental housing, and providing home
2427 ownership training to prospective home buyers and owners of
2428 homes assisted through the local housing assistance plan.

2429 1. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraphs (a) and
2430 (c), program income as defined in s. 420.9071(26) may also be
2431 used to fund activities described in this paragraph.

2432 2. When preconstruction due-diligence activities conducted
2433 as part of a preservation strategy show that preservation of the
2434 units is not feasible and will not result in the production of
2435 an eligible unit, such costs shall be deemed a program expense
2436 rather than an administrative expense if such program expenses

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2437 do not exceed 3 percent of the annual local housing
2438 distribution.

2439 3. If both an award under the local housing assistance plan
2440 and federal low-income housing tax credits are used to assist a
2441 project and there is a conflict between the criteria prescribed
2442 in this subsection and the requirements of s. 42 of the Internal
2443 Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, the county or eligible
2444 municipality may resolve the conflict by giving precedence to
2445 the requirements of s. 42 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986,
2446 as amended, in lieu of following the criteria prescribed in this
2447 subsection with the exception of paragraphs (a) and (g) of this
2448 subsection.

2449 4. Each county and each eligible municipality may award
2450 funds as a grant for construction, rehabilitation, or repair as
2451 part of disaster recovery or emergency repairs or to remedy
2452 accessibility or health and safety deficiencies. Any other
2453 grants must be approved as part of the local housing assistance
2454 plan.

2455 (o) Notwithstanding paragraphs (a) and (c), up to 25
2456 percent of the funds made available in each county and eligible
2457 municipality from the local housing distribution may be used to
2458 preserve multifamily affordable rental housing funded through
2459 United States Department of Agriculture loans. These funds may
2460 be used to rehabilitate housing, extend affordability periods,
2461 or acquire or transfer properties in partnership with private
2462 organizations. This paragraph expires on June 30, 2031.

2463 (13)

2464 (b) If, as a result of its review of the annual report, the
2465 corporation determines that a county or eligible municipality

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2466 has failed to implement a local housing incentive strategy, or,
2467 if applicable, a local housing incentive plan, it shall send a
2468 notice of termination of the local government's share of the
2469 local housing distribution by certified mail to the affected
2470 county or eligible municipality.

2471 1. The notice must specify a date of termination of the
2472 funding if the affected county or eligible municipality does not
2473 implement the plan or strategy and provide for a local response.
2474 A county or eligible municipality shall respond to the
2475 corporation within 30 days after receipt of the notice of
2476 termination.

2477 2. The corporation shall consider the local response that
2478 extenuating circumstances precluded implementation and grant an
2479 extension to the timeframe for implementation. Such an extension
2480 shall be made in the form of an extension agreement that
2481 provides a timeframe for implementation. The chief elected
2482 official of a county or eligible municipality or his or her
2483 designee shall have the authority to enter into the agreement on
2484 behalf of the local government.

2485 3. If the county or the eligible municipality has not
2486 implemented the incentive strategy or entered into an extension
2487 agreement by the termination date specified in the notice, the
2488 local housing distribution share terminates, and any uncommitted
2489 local housing distribution funds held by the affected county or
2490 eligible municipality in its local housing assistance trust fund
2491 shall be transferred to the Local Government Housing Trust Fund
2492 to the credit of the corporation to administer.

2493 4.a. If the affected local government fails to meet the
2494 timeframes specified in the agreement, the corporation shall

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2495 terminate funds. The corporation shall send a notice of
2496 termination of the local government's share of the local housing
2497 distribution by certified mail to the affected local government.
2498 The notice shall specify the termination date, and any
2499 uncommitted funds held by the affected local government shall be
2500 transferred to the Local Government Housing Trust Fund to the
2501 credit of the corporation to administer.

2502 b. If the corporation terminates funds to a county, but an
2503 eligible municipality receiving a local housing distribution
2504 pursuant to an interlocal agreement maintains compliance with
2505 program requirements, the corporation shall thereafter
2506 distribute directly to the participating eligible municipality
2507 its share calculated in the manner provided in ss. 420.9072 and
2508 420.9073.

2509 c. Any county or eligible municipality whose local
2510 distribution share has been terminated may subsequently elect to
2511 receive directly its local distribution share by adopting the
2512 ordinance, resolution, and local housing assistance plan in the
2513 manner and according to the procedures provided in ss. 420.907-
2514 420.9079.

2515 Section 36. Subsections (1), (2), and (5) of section
2516 1001.451, Florida Statutes, are amended, and subsection (6) is
2517 added to that section, to read:

2518 1001.451 Regional consortium service organizations.—In
2519 order to provide a full range of programs to larger numbers of
2520 students, minimize duplication of services, and encourage the
2521 development of new programs and services:

2522 (1) School districts with 20,000 or fewer unweighted full-
2523 time equivalent students, developmental research (laboratory)

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2524 schools established pursuant to s. 1002.32, and the Florida
 2525 School for the Deaf and the Blind may enter into cooperative
 2526 agreements to form a regional consortium service organization.
 2527 Each regional consortium service organization shall provide any
 2528 of, at a minimum, three of the following services determined
 2529 necessary and appropriate by the board of directors:

- 2530 (a) Exceptional student education;
 2531 (b) Safe schools support ~~teacher education centers;~~
 2532 environmental education;
 2533 (c) State and federal grant procurement and coordination;
 2534 (d) Data services ~~processing; health~~
 2535 (e) Insurance services;
 2536 (f) Risk management ~~insurance;~~
 2537 (g) Professional learning;
 2538 (h) College, career, and workforce development;
 2539 (i) Business and operational services ~~staff development;~~
 2540 (j) Purchasing; or
 2541 (k) Planning and accountability.

2542 (2)(a) Each regional consortium service organization that
 2543 consists of four or more school districts is eligible to
 2544 receive, through the Department of Education, subject to the
 2545 funds provided in the General Appropriations Act, an allocation
 2546 ~~incentive grant~~ of \$150,000 ~~\$50,000~~ per school district and
 2547 eligible member to be used for the delivery of services within
 2548 ~~the~~ participating school districts. The determination of
 2549 services and use of such funds must ~~shall~~ be established by the
 2550 board of directors of the regional consortium service
 2551 organization. The funds must ~~shall~~ be distributed to each
 2552 regional consortium service organization no later than 30 days

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2553 following the release of the funds to the department. Each
2554 regional consortium service organization shall submit an annual
2555 report to the department regarding the use of funds for
2556 consortia services. Unexpended amounts in any fund in a
2557 consortium's current year operating budget must be carried
2558 forward and included as the balance forward for that fund in the
2559 approved operating budget for the following year. Each regional
2560 consortium service organization shall provide quarterly
2561 financial reports to member districts.

2562 (b) Member districts shall designate a district that will
2563 serve as a fiscal agent for contractual and reporting purposes.
2564 Such fiscal agent district is entitled to reasonable
2565 compensation for accounting and other services performed. The
2566 regional consortium service organization shall retain all funds
2567 received from grants or contracted services to cover indirect or
2568 administrative costs associated with the provision of such
2569 services. The regional consortium service organization board of
2570 directors shall determine the products and services to be
2571 provided by the consortium; however, in all contractual matters,
2572 the school board of the fiscal agent district shall act on
2573 proposed actions of the regional consortium service
2574 organization.

2575 (c) The regional consortium service organization board of
2576 directors shall recommend establishment of positions and
2577 individuals for appointment to the fiscal agent district.
2578 Personnel must be employed under the personnel policies of the
2579 fiscal agent district and are deemed to be public employees of
2580 the fiscal agent district. The regional consortium service
2581 organization board of directors may recommend a salary schedule

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2582 and job descriptions specific to its personnel.

2583 (d) The regional consortium service organization may
2584 purchase or lease property and facilities essential for its
2585 operations and is responsible for their maintenance and
2586 associated overhead costs.

2587 (e) If a regional consortium service organization is
2588 dissolved, any revenue from the sale of assets must be
2589 distributed among the member districts as determined by the
2590 board of directors ~~Application for incentive grants shall be~~
2591 ~~made to the Commissioner of Education by July 30 of each year~~
2592 ~~for distribution to qualifying regional consortium service~~
2593 ~~organizations by January 1 of the fiscal year.~~

2594 (5) The board of directors of a regional consortium service
2595 organization may use various means to generate revenue in
2596 support of its activities, including, but not limited to,
2597 contracting for services to nonmember districts. The board of
2598 directors may acquire, enjoy, use, and dispose of patents,
2599 copyrights, and trademarks and any licenses and associated ~~other~~
2600 rights or interests ~~thereunder or therein~~. Ownership of all such
2601 patents, copyrights, trademarks, licenses, and associated rights
2602 or interests ~~thereunder or therein~~ shall vest in the state, with
2603 the board of directors having full right of use and full right
2604 to retain associated ~~the revenues derived therefrom~~. Any funds
2605 realized from contracted services, patents, copyrights,
2606 trademarks, or licenses are ~~shall be~~ considered internal funds
2607 as provided in s. 1011.07. A fund balance must be established
2608 for maintaining or expanding services, facilities maintenance,
2609 terminal pay, and other liabilities ~~Such funds shall be used to~~
2610 ~~support the organization's marketing and research and~~

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2611 ~~development activities in order to improve and increase services~~
 2612 ~~to its member districts.~~

2613 (6) A regional consortium service organization is
 2614 authorized to administer the Regional Consortia Service
 2615 Organization Supplemental Services Program under s. 1001.4511.

2616 Section 37. Section 1001.4511, Florida Statutes, is created
 2617 to read:

2618 1001.4511 Regional Consortia Service Organization
 2619 Supplemental Services Program.—

2620 (1) There is created the Regional Consortia Service
 2621 Organization Supplemental Services Program to increase the
 2622 ability of regional consortium service organizations under s.
 2623 1001.451 to provide programs and services to consortia members
 2624 through cooperative agreements. Program funds may be used to
 2625 supplement member needs related to transportation; district
 2626 finance personnel services; property insurance; cybersecurity
 2627 support; school safety; college, career, and workforce
 2628 development; academic support; and behavior support within
 2629 exceptional student education services.

2630 (2) Each regional consortium service organization shall
 2631 annually report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker
 2632 of the House of Representatives the distribution of funds,
 2633 including members awarded and services provided.

2634 (3) Notwithstanding s. 216.301 and pursuant to s. 216.351,
 2635 funds allocated for this purpose which are not disbursed by June
 2636 30 of the fiscal year in which the funds are allocated may be
 2637 carried forward for up to 5 years after the effective date of
 2638 the original appropriation.

2639 Section 38. Section 1009.635, Florida Statutes, is created

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2640 to read:

2641 1009.635 Rural Incentive for Professional Educators.-

2642 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.-The Rural Incentive for Professional
2643 Educators (RIPE) Program is established within the Department of
2644 Education to support the recruitment and retention of qualified
2645 instructional personnel in rural communities. The program shall
2646 provide financial assistance for the repayment of student loans
2647 for eligible participants who establish permanent residency and
2648 employment in rural areas of opportunity.

2649 (2) ELIGIBILITY.-An individual is eligible to participate
2650 in the RIPE Program if he or she does all of the following:

2651 (a) Establishes permanent residency on or after July 1,
2652 2025, in a rural area of opportunity as designated pursuant to
2653 s. 288.0656. The address on an individual's state-issued
2654 identification card or driver license is evidence of residence.

2655 (b) Secures full-time employment as a teacher or
2656 administrator in a private school as defined in s. 1002.01, or
2657 as instructional or administrative personnel as those terms are
2658 defined in s. 1012.01(2) and (3), respectively, in the public
2659 school district located within the same rural area of
2660 opportunity as he or she resides.

2661 (c) Holds an associate degree, bachelor's degree,
2662 postgraduate degree, or certificate from an accredited
2663 institution earned before establishing residency.

2664 (d) Has an active student loan balance incurred for the
2665 completion of the qualifying degree or certificate.

2666 (3) LOAN REPAYMENT.-Eligible participants may receive up to
2667 \$15,000 in total student loan repayment assistance over 5 years,
2668 disbursed in annual payments not to exceed \$3,000 per year.

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2669 Payments shall be made directly to the lender servicing the
2670 participant's student loan.

2671 (4) AWARD DISTRIBUTION.—Before disbursement of an award,
2672 the department shall verify that the participant:

2673 (a) Has maintained continuous employment with the school
2674 district in an instructional or administrative position;

2675 (b) Has received a rating of effective or highly effective
2676 pursuant to s. 1012.34; and

2677 (c) Has not been placed on probation, had his or her
2678 certificate suspended or revoked, or been placed on the
2679 disqualification list, pursuant to s. 1012.796.

2680 (5) ADMINISTRATION.—The program shall be administered by
2681 the Office of Student Financial Assistance within the Department
2682 of Education, which shall:

2683 (a) Develop application procedures requiring documentation,
2684 including proof of residency, verification of employment,
2685 official academic transcripts, and details of outstanding
2686 student loans.

2687 (b) Monitor compliance with program requirements.

2688 (6) RULEMAKING.—The State Board of Education shall adopt
2689 rules no later than January 31, 2026, to administer this
2690 section.

2691 Section 39. Subsection (3) of section 1013.62, Florida
2692 Statutes, is amended to read:

2693 1013.62 Charter schools capital outlay funding.—

2694 (3) If the school board levies the discretionary millage
2695 authorized in s. 1011.71(2), the department must ~~shall~~ use the
2696 following calculation methodology to determine the amount of
2697 revenue that a school district must distribute to each eligible

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2698 charter school:

2699 (a) Reduce the total discretionary millage revenue by the

2700 school district's annual debt service obligation incurred as of

2701 March 1, 2017, which has not been subsequently retired, and:

2702 1. Beginning in the 2025-2026 fiscal year, for any district

2703 with an active project or an outstanding participation

2704 requirement balance, any amount of participation requirement

2705 pursuant to s. 1013.64(2)(a)8. that is being satisfied by

2706 revenues raised by the discretionary millage; or

2707 2. For construction projects for which Special Facilities

2708 Construction Account funding is sought beginning in the 2025-

2709 2026 fiscal year, the value of 1 mill from the revenue generated

2710 pursuant to s. 1013.64(2)(a)8.b.

2711 (b) Divide the school district's adjusted discretionary

2712 millage revenue by the district's total capital outlay full-time

2713 equivalent membership and the total number of full-time

2714 equivalent students of each eligible charter school to determine

2715 a capital outlay allocation per full-time equivalent student.

2716 (c) Multiply the capital outlay allocation per full-time

2717 equivalent student by the total number of full-time equivalent

2718 students of each eligible charter school to determine the

2719 capital outlay allocation for each charter school.

2720 (d) If applicable, reduce the capital outlay allocation

2721 identified in paragraph (c) by the total amount of state funds

2722 allocated to each eligible charter school in subsection (2) to

2723 determine the maximum calculated capital outlay allocation. The

2724 amount of funds a school district must distribute to charter

2725 schools shall be as follows:

2726 1. For fiscal year 2023-2024, the amount is 20 percent of

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2727 the amount calculated under this paragraph.

2728 2. For fiscal year 2024-2025, the amount is 40 percent of
2729 the amount calculated under this paragraph.

2730 3. For fiscal year 2025-2026, the amount is 60 percent of
2731 the amount calculated under this paragraph.

2732 4. For fiscal year 2026-2027, the amount is 80 percent of
2733 the amount calculated under this paragraph.

2734 5. For fiscal year 2027-2028, and each fiscal year
2735 thereafter, the amount is 100 percent of the amount calculated
2736 under this paragraph.

2737 (e) School districts shall distribute capital outlay funds
2738 to eligible charter schools no later than February 1 of each
2739 year, as required by this subsection, based on the amount of
2740 funds received by the district school board. School districts
2741 shall distribute any remaining capital outlay funds, as required
2742 by this subsection, upon the receipt of such funds until the
2743 total amount calculated pursuant to this subsection is
2744 distributed.

2745
2746 By October 1 of each year, each school district shall certify to
2747 the department the amount of debt service that ~~and participation~~
2748 ~~requirement that complies with the requirement of paragraph (a)~~
2749 ~~and~~ can be reduced from the total discretionary millage revenue.
2750 Each school district shall also certify the amount of the
2751 participation requirement that complies with paragraph (a), or
2752 certify the value of 1 mill from revenue generated pursuant to
2753 s. 1013.64(2)(a)8.b. that can be reduced from the total
2754 discretionary millage revenue, as applicable. The Auditor
2755 General shall verify compliance with the requirements of

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2756 paragraph (a) and s. 1011.71(2)(e) during scheduled operational
2757 audits of school districts.

2758 Section 40. Paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of section
2759 1013.64, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

2760 1013.64 Funds for comprehensive educational plant needs;
2761 construction cost maximums for school district capital
2762 projects.—Allocations from the Public Education Capital Outlay
2763 and Debt Service Trust Fund to the various boards for capital
2764 outlay projects shall be determined as follows:

2765 (2)(a) The department shall establish, as a part of the
2766 Public Education Capital Outlay and Debt Service Trust Fund, a
2767 separate account, in an amount determined by the Legislature, to
2768 be known as the "Special Facility Construction Account." The
2769 Special Facility Construction Account shall be used to provide
2770 necessary construction funds to school districts which have
2771 urgent construction needs but which lack sufficient resources at
2772 present, and cannot reasonably anticipate sufficient resources
2773 within the period of the next 3 years, for these purposes from
2774 currently authorized sources of capital outlay revenue. A school
2775 district requesting funding from the Special Facility
2776 Construction Account shall submit one specific construction
2777 project, not to exceed one complete educational plant, to the
2778 Special Facility Construction Committee. A district may not
2779 receive funding for more than one approved project in any 3-year
2780 period ~~or while any portion of the district's participation~~
2781 ~~requirement is outstanding~~. The first year of the 3-year period
2782 shall be the first year a district receives an appropriation.
2783 The department shall encourage a construction program that
2784 reduces the average size of schools in the district. The request

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2785 must meet the following criteria to be considered by the
2786 committee:

2787 1. The project must be deemed a critical need and must be
2788 recommended for funding by the Special Facility Construction
2789 Committee. Before developing construction plans for the proposed
2790 facility, the district school board must request a
2791 preapplication review by the Special Facility Construction
2792 Committee or a project review subcommittee convened by the chair
2793 of the committee to include two representatives of the
2794 department and two staff members from school districts not
2795 eligible to participate in the program. A school district may
2796 request a preapplication review at any time; however, if the
2797 district school board seeks inclusion in the department's next
2798 annual capital outlay legislative budget request, the
2799 preapplication review request must be made before February 1.
2800 Within 90 days after receiving the preapplication review
2801 request, the committee or subcommittee must meet in the school
2802 district to review the project proposal and existing facilities.
2803 To determine whether the proposed project is a critical need,
2804 the committee or subcommittee shall consider, at a minimum, the
2805 capacity of all existing facilities within the district as
2806 determined by the Florida Inventory of School Houses; the
2807 district's pattern of student growth; the district's existing
2808 and projected capital outlay full-time equivalent student
2809 enrollment as determined by the demographic, revenue, and
2810 education estimating conferences established in s. 216.136; the
2811 district's existing satisfactory student stations; the use of
2812 all existing district property and facilities; grade level
2813 configurations; and any other information that may affect the

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2814 need for the proposed project.

2815 2. The construction project must be recommended in the most
2816 recent survey or survey amendment cooperatively prepared by the
2817 district and the department, and approved by the department
2818 under the rules of the State Board of Education. If a district
2819 employs a consultant in the preparation of a survey or survey
2820 amendment, the consultant may not be employed by or receive
2821 compensation from a third party that designs or constructs a
2822 project recommended by the survey.

2823 3. The construction project must appear on the district's
2824 approved project priority list under the rules of the State
2825 Board of Education.

2826 4. The district must have selected and had approved a site
2827 for the construction project in compliance with s. 1013.36 and
2828 the rules of the State Board of Education.

2829 5. The district shall have developed a district school
2830 board adopted list of facilities that do not exceed the norm for
2831 net square feet occupancy requirements under the State
2832 Requirements for Educational Facilities, using all possible
2833 programmatic combinations for multiple use of space to obtain
2834 maximum daily use of all spaces within the facility under
2835 consideration.

2836 6. Upon construction, the total cost per student station,
2837 including change orders, must not exceed the cost per student
2838 station as provided in subsection (6) unless approved by the
2839 Special Facility Construction Committee. At the discretion of
2840 the committee, costs that exceed the cost per student station
2841 for special facilities may include legal and administrative
2842 fees, the cost of site improvements or related offsite

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2843 improvements, the cost of complying with public shelter and
2844 hurricane hardening requirements, cost overruns created by a
2845 disaster as defined in s. 252.34(2), costs of security
2846 enhancements approved by the school safety specialist, and
2847 unforeseeable circumstances beyond the district's control.

2848 7. There shall be an agreement signed by the district
2849 school board stating that it will advertise for bids within 30
2850 days of receipt of its encumbrance authorization from the
2851 department.

2852 8.a.(I) For construction projects for which Special
2853 Facilities Construction Account funding is sought before the
2854 2019-2020 fiscal year, the district shall, at the time of the
2855 request and for a continuing period necessary to meet the
2856 district's participation requirement, levy the maximum millage
2857 against its nonexempt assessed property value as allowed in s.
2858 1011.71(2) or shall raise an equivalent amount of revenue from
2859 the school capital outlay surtax authorized under s. 212.055(6).

2860 (II) Beginning with construction projects for which Special
2861 Facilities Construction Account funding is sought in the 2019-
2862 2020 fiscal year, the district shall, for a minimum of 3 years
2863 before submitting the request and for a continuing period
2864 necessary to meet its participation requirement, levy the
2865 maximum millage against the district's nonexempt assessed
2866 property value as authorized under s. 1011.71(2) or shall raise
2867 an equivalent amount of revenue from the school capital outlay
2868 surtax authorized under s. 212.055(6).

2869 (III) Beginning with the 2025-2026 fiscal year, any
2870 district with an ~~a new or~~ active project or an outstanding
2871 participation requirement balance, funded under ~~the provisions~~

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2872 ~~of~~ this subsection, shall be required to budget no more than the
2873 value of 1 mill per year to the project until the district's
2874 participation requirement relating to the local discretionary
2875 capital improvement millage or the equivalent amount of revenue
2876 from the school capital outlay surtax is satisfied.

2877 b. For construction projects for which Special Facilities
2878 Construction Account funding is sought beginning in the 2025-
2879 2026 fiscal year, the district shall, for a minimum of 3 years
2880 before submitting the request and for the initial year of the
2881 appropriation and the two years following the initial
2882 appropriation, levy the maximum millage against the district's
2883 nonexempt assessed property value as authorized under s.
2884 1011.71(2) or shall raise an equivalent amount of revenue from
2885 the school capital outlay surtax authorized under s. 212.055(6).
2886 The district is not required to budget the funds toward the
2887 project, but must use the funds as authorized pursuant to s.
2888 1011.71 or s. 212.055(6), as applicable.

2889 9. If a contract has not been signed 90 days after the
2890 advertising of bids, the funding for the specific project must
2891 ~~shall~~ revert to the Special Facility New Construction Account to
2892 be reallocated to other projects on the list. However, an
2893 additional 90 days may be granted by the commissioner.

2894 10. The department shall certify the inability of the
2895 district to fund the survey-recommended project over a
2896 continuous 3-year period using projected capital outlay revenue
2897 derived from s. 9(d), Art. XII of the State Constitution, as
2898 amended, paragraph (3)(a) of this section, and s. 1011.71(2).

2899 11.a. For projects funded before the 2025-2026 fiscal year,
2900 the district shall have on file with the department an adopted

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2901 resolution acknowledging its commitment to satisfy its
2902 participation requirement, which is equivalent to all
2903 unencumbered and future revenue acquired from s. 9(d), Art. XII
2904 of the State Constitution, as amended, paragraph (3)(a) of this
2905 section, and s. 1011.71(2), in the year of the initial
2906 appropriation and for the 2 years immediately following the
2907 initial appropriation.

2908 b. For projects funded during the 2025-2026 fiscal year,
2909 and thereafter, the district shall have on file with the
2910 department an adopted resolution acknowledging its commitment to
2911 comply with the requirements of this paragraph.

2912 12. Phase I plans must be approved by the district school
2913 board as being in compliance with the building and life safety
2914 codes before June 1 of the year the application is made.

2915 Section 41. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the sum of \$1
2916 million in recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund is
2917 appropriated to the Florida Small Business Development Center
2918 Network under s. 288.001, Florida Statutes, to expand services
2919 in rural communities. The funds shall be allocated to the Office
2920 of Rural Prosperity budget entity within the Department of
2921 Commerce in the Special Categories-SBDCN Rural Services specific
2922 appropriation category.

2923 Section 42. (1) For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the sums of
2924 \$1,827,591 in recurring funds and \$652,327 in nonrecurring funds
2925 are appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Department
2926 of Commerce.

2927 (2) The recurring general revenue funds shall be allocated
2928 to the Office of Rural Prosperity budget entity in the following
2929 specific appropriations categories: \$1,585,823 in Salaries and

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2930 Benefits, \$175,961 in Expenses, \$50,000 in Contracted Services,
 2931 \$10,000 in Operating Capital Outlay, and \$5,807 in Transfer to
 2932 the Department of Management Services/Statewide Human Resources
 2933 Contract.

2934 (3) The nonrecurring general revenue funds shall be
 2935 allocated to the Office of Rural Prosperity budget entity in the
 2936 following specific appropriations categories: \$92,327 in
 2937 Expenses and \$560,000 in Acquisition of Motor Vehicles.

2938 (4) The Department of Commerce is authorized to establish
 2939 17.00 full-time equivalent positions with associated salary rate
 2940 of 1,060,000 in the Office of Rural Prosperity for the purpose
 2941 of implementing this act. The following specific positions,
 2942 classifications, and pay plans are authorized: 1.00 Director of
 2943 General Operation, Class Code 9327, Pay Grade 940; 15.00
 2944 Government Analyst II, Class Code 2225, Pay Grade 026; and 1.00
 2945 Administrative Assistant II, Class Code 0712, Pay Grade 018.

2946 Section 43. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the recurring
 2947 sum of \$8 million from the General Revenue Fund is appropriated
 2948 to the Office of Rural Prosperity within the Department of
 2949 Commerce to implement the Renaissance Grants Program created by
 2950 s. 288.014, Florida Statutes. No funds may be used by the state
 2951 for administrative costs.

2952 Section 44. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the recurring
 2953 sum of \$500,000 from the Grants and Donations Trust Fund is
 2954 appropriated to the Office of Rural Prosperity within the
 2955 Department of Commerce to implement the Public Infrastructure
 2956 Smart Technology Grant Program created by s. 288.0175, Florida
 2957 Statutes.

2958 Section 45. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the sums of \$4

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2959 million in nonrecurring funds and \$1 million in recurring funds
2960 from the General Revenue Fund are appropriated to the Office of
2961 Rural Prosperity within the Department of Commerce to implement
2962 the Rural Community Development Revolving Loan Fund under s.
2963 288.065, Florida Statutes, as amended by this act.

2964 Section 46. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the sums of \$40
2965 million in nonrecurring funds and \$5 million in recurring funds
2966 from the General Revenue Fund are appropriated to the Office of
2967 Rural Prosperity within the Department of Commerce to implement
2968 the Rural Infrastructure Fund under s. 288.0655, Florida
2969 Statutes, as amended by this act.

2970 Section 47. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the sum of
2971 \$250,000 in recurring funds from the Grants and Donations Trust
2972 Fund is appropriated to the Office of Rural Prosperity within
2973 the Department of Commerce to implement s. 288.0657, Florida
2974 Statutes, as amended by this act.

2975 Section 48. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the sum of \$30
2976 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund is
2977 appropriated to the Florida Housing Finance Corporation to be
2978 used to preserve affordable multifamily rental housing in rural
2979 communities funded through United States Department of
2980 Agriculture loans. The funds provided in this appropriation
2981 shall be used to issue competitive requests for application for
2982 the rehabilitation or acquisition of such properties to ensure
2983 continued affordability. By October 1, 2026, the Florida Housing
2984 Finance Corporation shall submit a report to the President of
2985 the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives on
2986 projects funded pursuant to this section, which report must
2987 include the number of units preserved and the financing

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2988 portfolio for each project.

2989 Section 49. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the sum of \$25
2990 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund is
2991 appropriated to the Department of Health for the purpose of
2992 implementing the Rural Access to Primary and Preventive Care
2993 Grant Program created under s. 381.403, Florida Statutes. Grant
2994 funds shall be awarded over a 5-year period. Notwithstanding s.
2995 216.301, Florida Statutes, and pursuant to s. 216.351, Florida
2996 Statutes, the unexpended balance of funds appropriated pursuant
2997 to this section which is not disbursed by June 30 of the fiscal
2998 year in which funds are appropriated may be carried forward
2999 through the 2033-2034 fiscal year.

3000 Section 50. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the sum of \$5
3001 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund is
3002 appropriated to the Department of Health for the purpose of
3003 implementing the Stroke, Cardiac, and Obstetric Response and
3004 Education Grant Program under s. 381.9856, Florida Statutes.
3005 Notwithstanding s. 216.301, Florida Statutes, and pursuant to s.
3006 216.351, Florida Statutes, the unexpended balance of funds
3007 appropriated pursuant to this section which is not disbursed by
3008 June 30 of the fiscal year in which funds are appropriated may
3009 be carried forward through the 2029-2030 fiscal year.

3010 Section 51. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the sum of \$25
3011 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund is
3012 appropriated in fixed capital outlay to the Department of Health
3013 for the purpose of implementing the rural hospital capital
3014 improvement grant program under s. 395.6061, Florida Statutes.

3015 Section 52. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the sums of
3016 \$1,499,261 in recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund and

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3017 \$1,933,112 in recurring funds from the Medical Care Trust Fund
3018 are appropriated to the Agency for Health Care Administration to
3019 establish a Diagnosis-Related Grouping (DRG) reimbursement
3020 methodology for critical access hospitals, as defined in s.
3021 408.07, Florida Statutes, for the purpose of providing inpatient
3022 reimbursement to such a hospital in amounts comparable to the
3023 reimbursement the hospital would receive for inpatient services
3024 from the federal Medicare program. The 2025-2026 fiscal year
3025 General Appropriations Act shall establish the DRG reimbursement
3026 methodology for critical access hospital inpatient services as
3027 directed in s. 409.905(5)(c), Florida Statutes.

3028 Section 53. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the sums of
3029 \$4,840,182 in recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund and
3030 \$6,240,820 in recurring funds from the Medical Care Trust Fund
3031 are appropriated to the Agency for Health Care Administration to
3032 establish an Enhanced Ambulatory Patient Grouping (EAPG)
3033 reimbursement methodology for critical access hospitals, as
3034 defined in s. 408.07, Florida Statutes, for the purpose of
3035 providing outpatient reimbursement to such a hospital in amounts
3036 comparable to the reimbursement the hospital would receive for
3037 outpatient services from the federal Medicare program. The 2025-
3038 2026 fiscal year General Appropriations Act shall establish the
3039 EAPG reimbursement methodology for critical access hospital
3040 outpatient services as directed in s. 409.905(6)(b), Florida
3041 Statutes.

3042 Section 54. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the sum of \$3.6
3043 million in recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund is
3044 appropriated to the Department of Education to implement s.
3045 1001.451, Florida Statutes, as amended by this act.

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3046 Section 55. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the sum of \$25
3047 million in recurring funds is appropriated from the General
3048 Revenue Fund to the Department of Education to be distributed to
3049 regional consortium service organizations under s. 1001.451,
3050 Florida Statutes, in order to provide funds pursuant to s.
3051 1001.4511, Florida Statutes. These funds shall be allocated as
3052 follows: \$5,555,149 to the Heartland Educational Consortium;
3053 \$11,912,923 to the North East Florida Educational Consortium;
3054 and \$7,531,928 to the Panhandle Area Educational Consortium. The
3055 funds must be distributed to each regional consortium service
3056 organization no later than 30 days following the release of the
3057 funds to the department.

3058 Section 56. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the sum of \$7
3059 million in recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund is
3060 appropriated to the Department of Education to implement the
3061 Rural Incentive for Professional Educators (RIPE) Program, s.
3062 1009.635, Florida Statutes, as created by this act.

3063 Section 57. Subsection (3) of section 163.3187, Florida
3064 Statutes, is amended to read:

3065 163.3187 Process for adoption of small scale comprehensive
3066 plan amendment.—

3067 (3) If the small scale development amendment involves a
3068 site within a rural area of opportunity as defined under s.
3069 288.0656 ~~s. 288.0656(2)(d)~~ for the duration of such designation,
3070 the acreage limit listed in subsection (1) shall be increased by
3071 100 percent. The local government approving the small scale plan
3072 amendment shall certify to the state land planning agency that
3073 the plan amendment furthers the economic objectives set forth in
3074 the executive order issued under s. 288.0656(7), and the

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3075 property subject to the plan amendment shall undergo public
3076 review to ensure that all concurrency requirements and federal,
3077 state, and local environmental permit requirements are met.

3078 Section 58. Section 212.205, Florida Statutes, is amended
3079 to read:

3080 212.205 Sales tax distribution reporting.—By March 15 of
3081 each year, each person who received a distribution pursuant to
3082 s. 212.20(6)(d)7.b. and c. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.b. and c.~~ in the
3083 preceding calendar year shall report to the Office of Economic
3084 and Demographic Research the following information:

3085 (1) An itemized accounting of all expenditures of the funds
3086 distributed in the preceding calendar year, including amounts
3087 spent on debt service.

3088 (2) A statement indicating what portion of the distributed
3089 funds have been pledged for debt service.

3090 (3) The original principal amount and current debt service
3091 schedule of any bonds or other borrowing for which the
3092 distributed funds have been pledged for debt service.

3093 Section 59. Section 257.191, Florida Statutes, is amended
3094 to read:

3095 257.191 Construction grants.—The Division of Library and
3096 Information Services may accept and administer library
3097 construction moneys appropriated to it and shall allocate such
3098 appropriation to municipal, county, and regional libraries in
3099 the form of library construction grants on a matching basis. The
3100 local matching portion shall be no less than the grant amount,
3101 on a dollar-for-dollar basis, up to the maximum grant amount,
3102 unless the matching requirement is waived pursuant to s. 288.019
3103 ~~by s. 288.06561~~. Initiation of a library construction project 12

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3104 months or less prior to the grant award under this section does
 3105 ~~shall~~ not affect the eligibility of an applicant to receive a
 3106 library construction grant. The division shall adopt rules for
 3107 the administration of library construction grants. For the
 3108 purposes of this section, s. 257.21 does not apply.

3109 Section 60. Subsection (2) of section 257.193, Florida
 3110 Statutes, is amended to read:

3111 257.193 Community Libraries in Caring Program.—

3112 (2) The purpose of the Community Libraries in Caring
 3113 Program is to assist libraries in rural communities, as defined
 3114 in s. 288.0656(2) and subject to the provisions of s. 288.019 ~~s.~~
 3115 ~~288.06561~~, to strengthen their collections and services, improve
 3116 literacy in their communities, and improve the economic
 3117 viability of their communities.

3118 Section 61. Subsection (17) of section 265.283, Florida
 3119 Statutes, is amended to read:

3120 265.283 Definitions.—The following definitions shall apply
 3121 to ss. 265.281-265.703:

3122 (17) "Underserved arts community assistance program grants"
 3123 means grants used by qualified organizations under the Rural
 3124 Economic Development Initiative, pursuant to s. 288.0656 and
 3125 subject to the provisions of s. 288.019 ~~ss. 288.0656 and~~
 3126 ~~288.06561~~, for the purpose of economic and organizational
 3127 development for underserved cultural organizations.

3128 Section 62. Paragraphs (a) and (d) of subsection (3) of
 3129 section 288.11621, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

3130 288.11621 Spring training baseball franchises.—

3131 (3) USE OF FUNDS.—

3132 (a) A certified applicant may use funds provided under s.

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3133 212.20(6)(d)7.b. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.b.~~ only to:

3134 1. Serve the public purpose of acquiring, constructing,
3135 reconstructing, or renovating a facility for a spring training
3136 franchise.

3137 2. Pay or pledge for the payment of debt service on, or to
3138 fund debt service reserve funds, arbitrage rebate obligations,
3139 or other amounts payable with respect thereto, bonds issued for
3140 the acquisition, construction, reconstruction, or renovation of
3141 such facility, or for the reimbursement of such costs or the
3142 refinancing of bonds issued for such purposes.

3143 3. Assist in the relocation of a spring training franchise
3144 from one unit of local government to another only if the
3145 governing board of the current host local government by a
3146 majority vote agrees to relocation.

3147 (d)1. All certified applicants must place unexpended state
3148 funds received pursuant to s. 212.20(6)(d)7.b. ~~s.~~
3149 ~~212.20(6)(d)6.b.~~ in a trust fund or separate account for use
3150 only as authorized in this section.

3151 2. A certified applicant may request that the Department of
3152 Revenue suspend further distributions of state funds made
3153 available under s. 212.20(6)(d)7.b. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.b.~~ for 12
3154 months after expiration of an existing agreement with a spring
3155 training franchise to provide the certified applicant with an
3156 opportunity to enter into a new agreement with a spring training
3157 franchise, at which time the distributions shall resume.

3158 3. The expenditure of state funds distributed to an
3159 applicant certified before July 1, 2010, must begin within 48
3160 months after the initial receipt of the state funds. In
3161 addition, the construction of, or capital improvements to, a

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3162 spring training facility must be completed within 24 months
3163 after the project's commencement.

3164 Section 63. Paragraph (c) of subsection (2) and paragraphs
3165 (a), (c), and (d) of subsection (3) of section 288.11631,
3166 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

3167 288.11631 Retention of Major League Baseball spring
3168 training baseball franchises.—

3169 (2) CERTIFICATION PROCESS.—

3170 (c) Each applicant certified on or after July 1, 2013,
3171 shall enter into an agreement with the department which:

3172 1. Specifies the amount of the state incentive funding to
3173 be distributed. The amount of state incentive funding per
3174 certified applicant may not exceed \$20 million. However, if a
3175 certified applicant's facility is used by more than one spring
3176 training franchise, the maximum amount may not exceed \$50
3177 million, and the Department of Revenue shall make distributions
3178 to the applicant pursuant to s. 212.20(6)(d)7.c. ~~s.~~
3179 ~~212.20(6)(d)6.e.~~

3180 2. States the criteria that the certified applicant must
3181 meet in order to remain certified. These criteria must include a
3182 provision stating that the spring training franchise must
3183 reimburse the state for any funds received if the franchise does
3184 not comply with the terms of the contract. If bonds were issued
3185 to construct or renovate a facility for a spring training
3186 franchise, the required reimbursement must be equal to the total
3187 amount of state distributions expected to be paid from the date
3188 the franchise violates the agreement with the applicant through
3189 the final maturity of the bonds.

3190 3. States that the certified applicant is subject to

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3191 decertification if the certified applicant fails to comply with
3192 this section or the agreement.

3193 4. States that the department may recover state incentive
3194 funds if the certified applicant is decertified.

3195 5. Specifies the information that the certified applicant
3196 must report to the department.

3197 6. Includes any provision deemed prudent by the department.

3198 (3) USE OF FUNDS.—

3199 (a) A certified applicant may use funds provided under s.
3200 212.20(6)(d)7.c. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.e.~~ only to:

3201 1. Serve the public purpose of constructing or renovating a
3202 facility for a spring training franchise.

3203 2. Pay or pledge for the payment of debt service on, or to
3204 fund debt service reserve funds, arbitrage rebate obligations,
3205 or other amounts payable with respect thereto, bonds issued for
3206 the construction or renovation of such facility, or for the
3207 reimbursement of such costs or the refinancing of bonds issued
3208 for such purposes.

3209 (c) The Department of Revenue may not distribute funds
3210 under s. 212.20(6)(d)7.c. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.e.~~ until July 1,
3211 2016. Further, the Department of Revenue may not distribute
3212 funds to an applicant certified on or after July 1, 2013, until
3213 it receives notice from the department that:

3214 1. The certified applicant has encumbered funds under
3215 either subparagraph (a)1. or subparagraph (a)2.; and

3216 2. If applicable, any existing agreement with a spring
3217 training franchise for the use of a facility has expired.

3218 (d)1. All certified applicants shall place unexpended state
3219 funds received pursuant to s. 212.20(6)(d)7.c. ~~s.~~

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3220 ~~212.20(6)(d)6.e.~~ in a trust fund or separate account for use
3221 only as authorized in this section.

3222 2. A certified applicant may request that the department
3223 notify the Department of Revenue to suspend further
3224 distributions of state funds made available under s.
3225 212.20(6)(d)7.c. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.e.~~ for 12 months after
3226 expiration of an existing agreement with a spring training
3227 franchise to provide the certified applicant with an opportunity
3228 to enter into a new agreement with a spring training franchise,
3229 at which time the distributions shall resume.

3230 3. The expenditure of state funds distributed to an
3231 applicant certified after July 1, 2013, must begin within 48
3232 months after the initial receipt of the state funds. In
3233 addition, the construction or renovation of a spring training
3234 facility must be completed within 24 months after the project's
3235 commencement.

3236 Section 64. Subsection (1) of section 443.191, Florida
3237 Statutes, is amended to read:

3238 443.191 Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund; establishment
3239 and control.—

3240 (1) There is established, as a separate trust fund apart
3241 from all other public funds of this state, an Unemployment
3242 Compensation Trust Fund, which shall be administered by the
3243 Department of Commerce exclusively for the purposes of this
3244 chapter. The fund must consist of:

3245 (a) All contributions and reimbursements collected under
3246 this chapter;

3247 (b) Interest earned on any moneys in the fund;

3248 (c) Any property or securities acquired through the use of

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3249 moneys belonging to the fund;

3250 (d) All earnings of these properties or securities;

3251 (e) All money credited to this state's account in the
3252 federal Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund under 42 U.S.C. s.
3253 1103;

3254 (f) All money collected for penalties imposed pursuant to
3255 s. 443.151(6) (a);

3256 (g) Advances on the amount in the federal Unemployment
3257 Compensation Trust Fund credited to the state under 42 U.S.C. s.
3258 1321, as requested by the Governor or the Governor's designee;
3259 and

3260 (h) All money deposited in this account as a distribution
3261 pursuant to s. 212.20(6)(d)7.e. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.e.~~

3262

3263 Except as otherwise provided in s. 443.1313(4), all moneys in
3264 the fund must be mingled and undivided.

3265 Section 65. Section 571.26, Florida Statutes, is amended to
3266 read:

3267 571.26 Florida Agricultural Promotional Campaign Trust
3268 Fund.—There is hereby created the Florida Agricultural
3269 Promotional Campaign Trust Fund within the Department of
3270 Agriculture and Consumer Services to receive all moneys related
3271 to the Florida Agricultural Promotional Campaign. Moneys
3272 deposited in the trust fund shall be appropriated for the sole
3273 purpose of implementing the Florida Agricultural Promotional
3274 Campaign, except for money deposited in the trust fund pursuant
3275 to s. 212.20(6)(d)7.h. ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.h.~~, which shall be held
3276 separately and used solely for the purposes identified in s.
3277 571.265.

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3278 Section 66. Subsection (2) of section 571.265, Florida
3279 Statutes, is amended to read:

3280 571.265 Promotion of Florida thoroughbred breeding and of
3281 thoroughbred racing at Florida thoroughbred tracks; distribution
3282 of funds.—

3283 (2) Funds deposited into the Florida Agricultural
3284 Promotional Campaign Trust Fund pursuant to s. 212.20(6)(d)7.f.
3285 ~~s. 212.20(6)(d)6.f.~~ shall be used by the department to encourage
3286 the agricultural activity of breeding thoroughbred racehorses in
3287 this state and to enhance thoroughbred racing conducted at
3288 thoroughbred tracks in this state as provided in this section.
3289 If the funds made available under this section are not fully
3290 used in any one fiscal year, any unused amounts shall be carried
3291 forward in the trust fund into future fiscal years and made
3292 available for distribution as provided in this section.

3293 Section 67. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
3294 made by this act to section 20.60, Florida Statutes, in a
3295 reference thereto, subsection (8) of section 288.9935, Florida
3296 Statutes, is reenacted to read:

3297 288.9935 Microfinance Guarantee Program.—

3298 (8) The department must, in the department's report
3299 required under s. 20.60(10), include an annual report on the
3300 program. The report must, at a minimum, provide:

3301 (a) A comprehensive description of the program, including
3302 an evaluation of its application and guarantee activities,
3303 recommendations for change, and identification of any other
3304 state programs that overlap with the program;

3305 (b) An assessment of the current availability of and access
3306 to credit for entrepreneurs and small businesses in this state;

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3307 (c) A summary of the financial and employment results of
3308 the entrepreneurs and small businesses receiving loan
3309 guarantees, including the number of full-time equivalent jobs
3310 created as a result of the guaranteed loans and the amount of
3311 wages paid to employees in the newly created jobs;

3312 (d) Industry data about the borrowers, including the six-
3313 digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)
3314 code;

3315 (e) The name and location of lenders that receive loan
3316 guarantees;

3317 (f) The number of loan guarantee applications received;

3318 (g) The number, duration, location, and amount of
3319 guarantees made;

3320 (h) The number and amount of guaranteed loans outstanding,
3321 if any;

3322 (i) The number and amount of guaranteed loans with payments
3323 overdue, if any;

3324 (j) The number and amount of guaranteed loans in default,
3325 if any;

3326 (k) The repayment history of the guaranteed loans made; and

3327 (l) An evaluation of the program's ability to meet the
3328 financial performance measures and objectives specified in
3329 subsection (3).

3330 Section 68. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
3331 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a
3332 reference thereto, paragraph (c) of subsection (5) of section
3333 125.0104, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

3334 125.0104 Tourist development tax; procedure for levying;
3335 authorized uses; referendum; enforcement.-

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3336 (5) AUTHORIZED USES OF REVENUE.—

3337 (c) A county located adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico or the
3338 Atlantic Ocean, except a county that receives revenue from taxes
3339 levied pursuant to s. 125.0108, which meets the following
3340 criteria may use up to 10 percent of the tax revenue received
3341 pursuant to this section to reimburse expenses incurred in
3342 providing public safety services, including emergency medical
3343 services as defined in s. 401.107(3), and law enforcement
3344 services, which are needed to address impacts related to
3345 increased tourism and visitors to an area. However, if taxes
3346 collected pursuant to this section are used to reimburse
3347 emergency medical services or public safety services for tourism
3348 or special events, the governing board of a county or
3349 municipality may not use such taxes to supplant the normal
3350 operating expenses of an emergency medical services department,
3351 a fire department, a sheriff's office, or a police department.
3352 To receive reimbursement, the county must:

3353 1.a. Generate a minimum of \$10 million in annual proceeds
3354 from any tax, or any combination of taxes, authorized to be
3355 levied pursuant to this section;

3356 b. Have at least three municipalities; and

3357 c. Have an estimated population of less than 275,000,
3358 according to the most recent population estimate prepared
3359 pursuant to s. 186.901, excluding the inmate population; or

3360 2. Be a fiscally constrained county as described in s.
3361 218.67(1).

3362

3363 The board of county commissioners must by majority vote approve
3364 reimbursement made pursuant to this paragraph upon receipt of a

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3365 recommendation from the tourist development council.

3366 Section 69. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
3367 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a
3368 reference thereto, subsection (3) of section 193.624, Florida
3369 Statutes, is reenacted to read:

3370 193.624 Assessment of renewable energy source devices.—

3371 (3) This section applies to the installation of a renewable
3372 energy source device installed on or after January 1, 2013, to
3373 new and existing residential real property. This section applies
3374 to a renewable energy source device installed on or after
3375 January 1, 2018, to all other real property, except when
3376 installed as part of a project planned for a location in a
3377 fiscally constrained county, as defined in s. 218.67(1), and for
3378 which an application for a comprehensive plan amendment or
3379 planned unit development zoning has been filed with the county
3380 on or before December 31, 2017.

3381 Section 70. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
3382 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a
3383 reference thereto, subsection (2) of section 196.182, Florida
3384 Statutes, is reenacted to read:

3385 196.182 Exemption of renewable energy source devices.—

3386 (2) The exemption provided in this section does not apply
3387 to a renewable energy source device that is installed as part of
3388 a project planned for a location in a fiscally constrained
3389 county, as defined in s. 218.67(1), and for which an application
3390 for a comprehensive plan amendment or planned unit development
3391 zoning has been filed with the county on or before December 31,
3392 2017.

3393 Section 71. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment

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3394 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a
3395 reference thereto, subsection (1) of section 218.12, Florida
3396 Statutes, is reenacted to read:

3397 218.12 Appropriations to offset reductions in ad valorem
3398 tax revenue in fiscally constrained counties.—

3399 (1) Beginning in fiscal year 2008-2009, the Legislature
3400 shall appropriate moneys to offset the reductions in ad valorem
3401 tax revenue experienced by fiscally constrained counties, as
3402 defined in s. 218.67(1), which occur as a direct result of the
3403 implementation of revisions of Art. VII of the State
3404 Constitution approved in the special election held on January
3405 29, 2008. The moneys appropriated for this purpose shall be
3406 distributed in January of each fiscal year among the fiscally
3407 constrained counties based on each county's proportion of the
3408 total reduction in ad valorem tax revenue resulting from the
3409 implementation of the revision.

3410 Section 72. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
3411 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a
3412 reference thereto, subsection (1) of section 218.125, Florida
3413 Statutes, is reenacted to read:

3414 218.125 Offset for tax loss associated with certain
3415 constitutional amendments affecting fiscally constrained
3416 counties.—

3417 (1) Beginning in the 2010-2011 fiscal year, the Legislature
3418 shall appropriate moneys to offset the reductions in ad valorem
3419 tax revenue experienced by fiscally constrained counties, as
3420 defined in s. 218.67(1), which occur as a direct result of the
3421 implementation of revisions of ss. 3(f) and 4(b), Art. VII of
3422 the State Constitution which were approved in the general

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3423 election held in November 2008. The moneys appropriated for this
3424 purpose shall be distributed in January of each fiscal year
3425 among the fiscally constrained counties based on each county's
3426 proportion of the total reduction in ad valorem tax revenue
3427 resulting from the implementation of the revisions.

3428 Section 73. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
3429 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a
3430 reference thereto, subsection (1) of section 218.135, Florida
3431 Statutes, is reenacted to read:

3432 218.135 Offset for tax loss associated with reductions in
3433 value of certain citrus fruit packing and processing equipment.—

3434 (1) For the 2018-2019 fiscal year, the Legislature shall
3435 appropriate moneys to offset the reductions in ad valorem tax
3436 revenue experienced by fiscally constrained counties, as defined
3437 in s. 218.67(1), which occur as a direct result of the
3438 implementation of s. 193.4516. The moneys appropriated for this
3439 purpose shall be distributed in January 2019 among the fiscally
3440 constrained counties based on each county's proportion of the
3441 total reduction in ad valorem tax revenue resulting from the
3442 implementation of s. 193.4516.

3443 Section 74. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
3444 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a
3445 reference thereto, subsection (1) of section 218.136, Florida
3446 Statutes, is reenacted to read:

3447 218.136 Offset for ad valorem revenue loss affecting
3448 fiscally constrained counties.—

3449 (1) Beginning in fiscal year 2025-2026, the Legislature
3450 shall appropriate moneys to offset the reductions in ad valorem
3451 tax revenue experienced by fiscally constrained counties, as

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3452 defined in s. 218.67(1), which occur as a direct result of the
3453 implementation of revisions of s. 6(a), Art. VII of the State
3454 Constitution approved in the November 2024 general election. The
3455 moneys appropriated for this purpose shall be distributed in
3456 January of each fiscal year among the fiscally constrained
3457 counties based on each county's proportion of the total
3458 reduction in ad valorem tax revenue resulting from the
3459 implementation of the revision of s. 6(a), Art. VII of the State
3460 Constitution.

3461 Section 75. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
3462 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a
3463 reference thereto, paragraph (cc) of subsection (2) of section
3464 252.35, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

3465 252.35 Emergency management powers; Division of Emergency
3466 Management.—

3467 (2) The division is responsible for carrying out the
3468 provisions of ss. 252.31-252.90. In performing its duties, the
3469 division shall:

3470 (cc) Prioritize technical assistance and training to
3471 fiscally constrained counties as defined in s. 218.67(1) on
3472 aspects of safety measures, preparedness, prevention, response,
3473 recovery, and mitigation relating to natural disasters and
3474 emergencies.

3475 Section 76. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
3476 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a
3477 reference thereto, subsection (4) of section 288.102, Florida
3478 Statutes, is reenacted to read:

3479 288.102 Supply Chain Innovation Grant Program.—

3480 (4) A minimum of a one-to-one match of nonstate resources,

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3481 including local, federal, or private funds, to the state
3482 contribution is required. An award may not be made for a project
3483 that is receiving or using state funding from another state
3484 source or statutory program, including tax credits. The one-to-
3485 one match requirement is waived for a public entity located in a
3486 fiscally constrained county as defined in s. 218.67(1).

3487 Section 77. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
3488 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a
3489 reference thereto, paragraph (g) of subsection (16) of section
3490 403.064, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

3491 403.064 Reuse of reclaimed water.—

3492 (16) By November 1, 2021, domestic wastewater utilities
3493 that dispose of effluent, reclaimed water, or reuse water by
3494 surface water discharge shall submit to the department for
3495 review and approval a plan for eliminating nonbeneficial surface
3496 water discharge by January 1, 2032, subject to the requirements
3497 of this section. The plan must include the average gallons per
3498 day of effluent, reclaimed water, or reuse water that will no
3499 longer be discharged into surface waters and the date of such
3500 elimination, the average gallons per day of surface water
3501 discharge which will continue in accordance with the
3502 alternatives provided for in subparagraphs (a)2. and 3., and the
3503 level of treatment that the effluent, reclaimed water, or reuse
3504 water will receive before being discharged into a surface water
3505 by each alternative.

3506 (g) This subsection does not apply to any of the following:

- 3507 1. A domestic wastewater treatment facility that is located
3508 in a fiscally constrained county as described in s. 218.67(1).
- 3509 2. A domestic wastewater treatment facility that is located

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3510 in a municipality that is entirely within a rural area of
3511 opportunity as designated pursuant to s. 288.0656.

3512 3. A domestic wastewater treatment facility that is located
3513 in a municipality that has less than \$10 million in total
3514 revenue, as determined by the municipality's most recent annual
3515 financial report submitted to the Department of Financial
3516 Services in accordance with s. 218.32.

3517 4. A domestic wastewater treatment facility that is
3518 operated by an operator of a mobile home park as defined in s.
3519 723.003 and has a permitted capacity of less than 300,000
3520 gallons per day.

3521 Section 78. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
3522 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in
3523 references thereto, subsections (2) and (3) of section 589.08,
3524 Florida Statutes, are reenacted to read:

3525 589.08 Land acquisition restrictions.—

3526 (2) The Florida Forest Service may receive, hold the
3527 custody of, and exercise the control of any lands, and set aside
3528 into a separate, distinct and inviolable fund, any proceeds
3529 derived from the sales of the products of such lands, the use
3530 thereof in any manner, or the sale of such lands save the 25
3531 percent of the proceeds to be paid into the State School Fund as
3532 provided by law. The Florida Forest Service may use and apply
3533 such funds for the acquisition, use, custody, management,
3534 development, or improvement of any lands vested in or subject to
3535 the control of the Florida Forest Service. After full payment
3536 has been made for the purchase of a state forest to the Federal
3537 Government or other grantor, 15 percent of the gross receipts
3538 from a state forest shall be paid to the fiscally constrained

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3539 county or counties, as described in s. 218.67(1), in which it is
3540 located in proportion to the acreage located in each county for
3541 use by the county or counties for school purposes.

3542 (3) The Florida Forest Service shall pay 15 percent of the
3543 gross receipts from the Goethe State Forest to each fiscally
3544 constrained county, as described in s. 218.67(1), in which a
3545 portion of the respective forest is located in proportion to the
3546 forest acreage located in such county. The funds must be equally
3547 divided between the board of county commissioners and the school
3548 board of each fiscally constrained county.

3549 Section 79. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
3550 made by this act to section 218.67, Florida Statutes, in a
3551 reference thereto, paragraph (f) of subsection (1) of section
3552 1011.62, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

3553 1011.62 Funds for operation of schools.—If the annual
3554 allocation from the Florida Education Finance Program to each
3555 district for operation of schools is not determined in the
3556 annual appropriations act or the substantive bill implementing
3557 the annual appropriations act, it shall be determined as
3558 follows:

3559 (1) COMPUTATION OF THE BASIC AMOUNT TO BE INCLUDED FOR
3560 OPERATION.—The following procedure shall be followed in
3561 determining the annual allocation to each district for
3562 operation:

3563 (f) *Small district factor*.—An additional value per full-
3564 time equivalent student membership is provided to each school
3565 district with a full-time equivalent student membership of fewer
3566 than 20,000 full-time equivalent students which is in a fiscally
3567 constrained county as described in s. 218.67(1). The amount of

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3568 the additional value shall be specified in the General
3569 Appropriations Act.

3570 Section 80. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
3571 made by this act to sections 218.67 and 339.2818, Florida
3572 Statutes, in references thereto, paragraph (c) of subsection (6)
3573 of section 403.0741, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

3574 403.0741 Grease waste removal and disposal.—

3575 (6) REGULATION BY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS.—

3576 (c) Fiscally constrained counties as described in s.
3577 218.67(1) and small counties as defined in s. 339.2818(2) may
3578 opt out of the requirements of this section.

3579 Section 81. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
3580 made by this act to section 288.0656, Florida Statutes, in a
3581 reference thereto, paragraph (e) of subsection (7) of section
3582 163.3177, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

3583 163.3177 Required and optional elements of comprehensive
3584 plan; studies and surveys.—

3585 (7)

3586 (e) This subsection does not confer the status of rural
3587 area of opportunity, or any of the rights or benefits derived
3588 from such status, on any land area not otherwise designated as
3589 such pursuant to s. 288.0656(7).

3590 Section 82. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
3591 made by this act to section 288.9961, Florida Statutes, in a
3592 reference thereto, paragraph (a) of subsection (7) of section
3593 288.9962, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

3594 288.9962 Broadband Opportunity Program.—

3595 (7) (a) In evaluating grant applications and awarding
3596 grants, the office must give priority to applications that:

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- 3597 1. Offer broadband Internet service to important community
3598 institutions, including, but not limited to, libraries,
3599 educational institutions, public safety facilities, and health
3600 care facilities;
- 3601 2. Facilitate the use of telemedicine and electronic health
3602 records;
- 3603 3. Serve economically distressed areas of this state, as
3604 measured by indices of unemployment, poverty, or population loss
3605 that are significantly greater than the statewide average;
- 3606 4. Provide for scalability to transmission speeds of at
3607 least 100 megabits per second download and 10 megabits per
3608 second upload;
- 3609 5. Include a component to actively promote the adoption of
3610 the newly available broadband Internet service in the community;
- 3611 6. Provide evidence of strong support for the project from
3612 citizens, government, businesses, and institutions in the
3613 community;
- 3614 7. Provide access to broadband Internet service to the
3615 greatest number of unserved households and businesses;
- 3616 8. Leverage greater amounts of funding for a project from
3617 private sources; or
- 3618 9. Demonstrate consistency with the strategic plan adopted
3619 under s. 288.9961.
- 3620 Section 83. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
3621 made by this act to section 319.32, Florida Statutes, in a
3622 reference thereto, subsection (1) of section 215.211, Florida
3623 Statutes, is reenacted to read:
- 3624 215.211 Service charge; elimination or reduction for
3625 specified proceeds.—

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3626 (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of s. 215.20(1) and
3627 former s. 215.20(3), the service charge provided in s. 215.20(1)
3628 and former s. 215.20(3), which is deducted from the proceeds of
3629 the taxes distributed under ss. 206.606(1), 207.026,
3630 212.0501(6), and 319.32(5), shall be eliminated beginning July
3631 1, 2000.

3632 Section 84. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
3633 made by this act to section 339.68, Florida Statutes, in
3634 references thereto, subsections (5) and (6) of section 339.66,
3635 Florida Statutes, are reenacted to read:

3636 339.66 Upgrade of arterial highways with controlled access
3637 facilities.—

3638 (5) Any existing applicable requirements relating to
3639 department projects shall apply to projects undertaken by the
3640 department pursuant to this section. The department shall take
3641 into consideration the guidance and recommendations of any
3642 previous studies or reports relevant to the projects authorized
3643 by this section and ss. 339.67 and 339.68, including, but not
3644 limited to, the task force reports prepared pursuant to chapter
3645 2019-43, Laws of Florida.

3646 (6) Any existing applicable requirements relating to
3647 turnpike projects apply to projects undertaken by the Turnpike
3648 Enterprise pursuant to this section. The Turnpike Enterprise
3649 shall take into consideration the guidance and recommendations
3650 of any previous studies or reports relevant to the projects
3651 authorized by this section and ss. 339.67 and 339.68, including,
3652 but not limited to, the task force reports prepared pursuant to
3653 chapter 2019-43, Laws of Florida, and with respect to any
3654 extension of the Florida Turnpike from its northerly terminus in

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3655 Wildwood.

3656 Section 85. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
3657 made by this act to section 420.9073, Florida Statutes, in
3658 references thereto, subsections (4) and (6) of section 420.9072,
3659 Florida Statutes, are reenacted to read:

3660 420.9072 State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program.—The
3661 State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program is created for the
3662 purpose of providing funds to counties and eligible
3663 municipalities as an incentive for the creation of local housing
3664 partnerships, to expand production of and preserve affordable
3665 housing, to further the housing element of the local government
3666 comprehensive plan specific to affordable housing, and to
3667 increase housing-related employment.

3668 (4) Moneys in the Local Government Housing Trust Fund shall
3669 be distributed by the corporation to each approved county and
3670 eligible municipality within the county as provided in s.
3671 420.9073. Distributions shall be allocated to the participating
3672 county and to each eligible municipality within the county
3673 according to an interlocal agreement between the county
3674 governing authority and the governing body of the eligible
3675 municipality or, if there is no interlocal agreement, according
3676 to population. The portion for each eligible municipality is
3677 computed by multiplying the total moneys earmarked for a county
3678 by a fraction, the numerator of which is the population of the
3679 eligible municipality and the denominator of which is the total
3680 population of the county. The remaining revenues shall be
3681 distributed to the governing body of the county.

3682 (6) The moneys that otherwise would be distributed pursuant
3683 to s. 420.9073 to a local government that does not meet the

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3684 program's requirements for receipts of such distributions shall
3685 remain in the Local Government Housing Trust Fund to be
3686 administered by the corporation.

3687 Section 86. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
3688 made by this act to section 420.9073, Florida Statutes, in a
3689 reference thereto, paragraph (b) of subsection (7) of section
3690 420.9076, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

3691 420.9076 Adoption of affordable housing incentive
3692 strategies; committees.—

3693 (7) The governing board of the county or the eligible
3694 municipality shall notify the corporation by certified mail of
3695 its adoption of an amendment of its local housing assistance
3696 plan to incorporate local housing incentive strategies. The
3697 notice must include a copy of the approved amended plan.

3698 (b) If a county fails to timely adopt an amended local
3699 housing assistance plan to incorporate local housing incentive
3700 strategies but an eligible municipality receiving a local
3701 housing distribution pursuant to an interlocal agreement within
3702 the county does timely adopt an amended local housing assistance
3703 plan to incorporate local housing incentive strategies, the
3704 corporation, after issuance of a notice of termination, shall
3705 thereafter distribute directly to the participating eligible
3706 municipality its share calculated in the manner provided in s.
3707 420.9073.

3708 Section 87. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
3709 made by this act to section 420.9073, Florida Statutes, in a
3710 reference thereto, subsection (2) of section 420.9079, Florida
3711 Statutes, is reenacted to read:

3712 420.9079 Local Government Housing Trust Fund.—

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3713 (2) The corporation shall administer the fund exclusively
3714 for the purpose of implementing the programs described in ss.
3715 420.907-420.9076 and this section. With the exception of
3716 monitoring the activities of counties and eligible
3717 municipalities to determine local compliance with program
3718 requirements, the corporation shall not receive appropriations
3719 from the fund for administrative or personnel costs. For the
3720 purpose of implementing the compliance monitoring provisions of
3721 s. 420.9075(9), the corporation may request a maximum of one-
3722 quarter of 1 percent of the annual appropriation per state
3723 fiscal year. When such funding is appropriated, the corporation
3724 shall deduct the amount appropriated prior to calculating the
3725 local housing distribution pursuant to ss. 420.9072 and
3726 420.9073.

3727 Section 88. This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.