

HB 1415

2017

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to regional rural development grants;
3 amending s. 288.018, F.S.; revising a grant program
4 that shall be established by the Department of
5 Economic Opportunity to provide funding to certain
6 entities; providing a maximum amount of grant funding
7 that specified economic development organizations may
8 receive; providing for the use of grant funds for
9 professional services, operations, and the engagement
10 and compensation of professional staff; deleting a
11 provision authorizing the Department of Economic
12 Opportunity to contract for the development of certain
13 enterprise zone web portals or websites; increasing
14 the maximum amount the department may expend from
15 funds appropriated to the Rural Community Development
16 Revolving Loan Fund for certain expenses; providing an
17 effective date.

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

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21 Section 1. Subsections (1), (3), and (4) of section
22 288.018, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

23 288.018 Regional Rural Development Grants Program.—

24 (1) The department shall establish a ~~matching~~ grant
25 program to provide funding to regionally based economic

26 | development organizations representing rural counties and
27 | communities for the purpose of building the professional
28 | capacity of regional economic development ~~their~~ organizations.
29 | Building the professional capacity of the regional economic
30 | development organizations includes the engagement and
31 | compensation of professional staff to develop, facilitate the
32 | delivery of, and directly provide needed economic development
33 | professional services, including technical assistance, education
34 | and leadership development, marketing and project recruitment,
35 | and other services deemed important for rural economic
36 | development. Such ~~matching~~ grants may also be used by an
37 | economic development organization to provide technical
38 | assistance to local governments, local economic development
39 | organizations, and existing and prospective businesses within
40 | the rural counties and communities that it serves. The
41 | department is authorized to approve, on an annual basis, grants
42 | to such regionally based economic development organizations. The
43 | maximum amount an organization may receive in any year will be
44 | \$50,000, or \$250,000 for each of the three regional economic
45 | development organizations serving the rural areas of opportunity
46 | as defined by executive order of the Governor. The three
47 | organizations include the North Florida Economic Development
48 | Partnership, Opportunity Florida, and Florida's Heartland
49 | ~~\$150,000 in a rural area of opportunity recommended by the Rural~~
50 | ~~Economic Development Initiative, Inc. and designated by the~~

51 ~~Governor, and must be matched each year by an equivalent amount~~
52 ~~of nonstate resources.~~

53 ~~(3) The department may also contract for the development~~
54 ~~of an enterprise zone web portal or websites for each enterprise~~
55 ~~zone which will be used to market the program for job creation~~
56 ~~in disadvantaged urban and rural enterprise zones. Each~~
57 ~~enterprise zone web page should include downloadable links to~~
58 ~~state forms and information, as well as local message boards~~
59 ~~that help businesses and residents receive information~~
60 ~~concerning zone boundaries, job openings, zone programs, and~~
61 ~~neighborhood improvement activities.~~

62 (3)~~(4)~~ The department may expend up to \$1 million ~~\$750,000~~
63 each fiscal year from funds appropriated to the Rural Community
64 Development Revolving Loan Fund for the purposes outlined in
65 this section. The department may contract with Enterprise
66 Florida, Inc., for the administration of the purposes specified
67 in this section. Funds released to Enterprise Florida, Inc., for
68 this purpose shall be released quarterly and shall be calculated
69 based on the applications in process.

70 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2017.
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