

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- LONG-TERM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Introduced By: Representatives Boylan, Cortvriend, Carson, Spears, Bennett, Kislak, Shanley, Fogarty, McGaw, and Alzate

Date Introduced: January 19, 2024

Referred To: House State Government & Elections

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 42-64.17-1 of the General Laws in Chapter 42-64.17 entitled "Long-
2 Term Economic Development" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **42-64.17-1. Long-term economic development vision and policy.**

4 (a) The economic development corporation and the division of planning shall develop a
5 written long-term economic development vision and policy for the state of Rhode Island and a
6 strategic plan for implementing this policy. Such a plan shall include, but not be limited to:

7 (1) A unified economic development strategy for the state that integrates business growth
8 with land use and transportation choices;

9 (2) An analysis of how the state's infrastructure can best support this unified economic
10 development strategy;

11 (3) A focus and prioritization that the outcomes of the economic development strategy be
12 equitable for all Rhode Islanders;

13 (4) Reliance on comprehensive economic data and analysis relating to Rhode Island's
14 economic competitiveness, business climate, [climate change, sea-level rise, coastal resiliency,](#)
15 national and regional reputation, and present economic development resources;

16 (5) Suggestions for improving and expanding the skills, abilities, and resources of state
17 agencies, municipalities, and community partners to speed implementation of the plan's
18 recommendations; and

1 (6) The inclusion of detailed implementation plans, including stated goals, specific
2 performance measures and indicators.

3 (b) On or before October 31, 2014, the economic development corporation and the division
4 of planning shall submit the written long-term economic development vision and policy and
5 implementation plan to the governor, the senate and the house of representatives.

6 (c) Beginning January 1, 2015, and during the first year of each new or re-elected
7 gubernatorial administration thereafter, the governor shall convene an economic development
8 planning council consisting of no fewer than ~~seventeen (17)~~ nineteen (19) members as follows:

9 (1)~~(i)~~ The ~~director of the economic development corporation~~ secretary of commerce who
10 shall serve as chair, ~~until such time that the secretary of commerce is appointed;~~

11 ~~(ii) Upon his or her appointment, the secretary of commerce shall replace the director of~~
12 ~~the economic development corporation as a member, and shall serve as chair;~~

13 (2) The director of the department of administration;

14 (3) The director of the department of revenue;

15 (4) The director of the department of labor and training;

16 (5) The director of the department of transportation;

17 (6) The director of the department of business regulation;

18 (7) The commissioner of elementary and secondary education;

19 (8) The commissioner of higher education;

20 (9) The director of the department of environmental management;

21 (10) The director of the coastal resources management council;

22 ~~(9)~~(11) One member who shall be appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;

23 ~~(10)~~(12) One member who shall be appointed by the president of the senate; and

24 ~~(11)~~(13) Seven (7) members who shall be appointed by the governor as follows: one of
25 whom shall be a representative from the league of cities and towns; one of whom shall be a
26 representative from a chamber of commerce; one of whom shall be from a nonprofit organization
27 representing a major industry sector in Rhode Island; one of whom shall represent a business with
28 more than one hundred (100) employees located in Rhode Island; one of whom shall represent a
29 business with fewer than one hundred (100) employees located in Rhode Island; one of whom shall
30 be from a venture capital firm with a principal place of business in Rhode Island; and one of whom
31 shall represent a private sector labor union. Any department director appointed as a member of the
32 council may appoint a designee from his or her respective agency to represent him/her on the
33 council. Members of the council shall serve for a term of one year or until an economic development
34 policy has been approved by the governor under this section.

1 (d) The economic development planning council and, upon his or her appointment, the
2 secretary of commerce, shall develop a written long-term economic development vision and policy
3 for the state and a strategic plan for implementing the policy. In developing the policy, the council
4 shall review and consider the published economic development policy and implementation plan in
5 effect at the commencement of the governor's term of office. The policy shall set long term goals
6 and measurable benchmarks which are not limited to a particular gubernatorial administration and
7 shall give consideration to any impacts the plan may have on businesses employing ten (10) or
8 fewer people. The strategic plan shall include any major economic development initiatives and
9 programs in effect at the time of the plan's creation. In developing the policy the council may hold
10 public hearings throughout the state.

11 (e) Once the policy and plan have been adopted by the council and, upon his or her
12 appointment, the secretary of commerce, shall submit the policy and plan to the senate and house
13 of representatives. The final approval of the policy and plan by the governor shall not be granted
14 until the house and senate have conducted a public hearing on the policy and plan. The approved
15 policy and plan shall be published in writing and on the official website of the state no later than
16 December 31 of that year.

17 (f) The economic development corporation shall be responsible for providing staff to
18 support the work of the council, and the division of planning shall also provide staff support. All
19 departments represented on the council shall cooperate with the economic development corporation
20 and the division of planning to facilitate the purposes of this chapter.

21 (g) Subject to funding, the council shall be able to hire consultants and related assistance
22 to provide the type of analysis necessary to inform and perform their work.

23 (h) All departments, offices, boards and agencies of the state shall cooperate with the
24 economic development planning council and furnish such administrative and staff support, advice,
25 information, documentary and otherwise, data and data analysis, and other support as may be
26 necessary or desirable.

27 (i) In carrying out the responsibility under this order, the council may:
28 (1) Accept grant funds and in-kind contributions from governmental and private entities;
29 (2) Hold public hearings;
30 (3) Invite experts and other witnesses to submit testimony; and
31 (4) Contract with experts and consultants as necessary to inform deliberations and
32 recommendations.

33 (j) In addition to any other applicable law, rules or regulations, the economic development
34 planning council shall be subject to the provisions of the Open Meetings Act, title 42, chapter 46

1 of the Rhode Island general laws, and the Public Records Act, title 38, chapter 2 of the Rhode Island
2 general laws.

3 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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DEVELOPMENT

1 This act would add climate change, sea-level rise and coastal resiliency to the analysis of
2 data of the strategic plan for economic development policy. This act would also change the number
3 of members of the economic development planning council from seventeen (17) to nineteen (19)
4 by adding the directors of the department of environmental management and coastal resources
5 management council.

6 This act would take effect upon passage.

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