

2018 -- S 2522

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2018

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A N A C T

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

Introduced By: Senator Leonidas P. Raptakis

Date Introduced: March 01, 2018

Referred To: Senate Finance

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  
2 "Long-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, national and regional reputation, and present  
15 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  
4 division of planning shall submit the written long-term economic development vision and policy  
5 and 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) members as follows:

9 (1) (i) The director of the economic development corporation who shall serve as chair,  
10 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) One member who shall be appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;

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

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

33 (d) The economic development planning council and, upon his or her appointment, the  
34 secretary of commerce, shall develop a written long-term economic development vision and

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

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

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

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

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

26 (i) In carrying out the responsibility under this order, the council may:

- 27 (1) Accept grant funds and in-kind contributions from governmental and private entities;
- 28 (2) Hold public hearings;
- 29 (3) Invite experts and other witnesses to submit testimony; and
- 30 (4) Contract with experts and consultants as necessary to inform deliberations and  
31 recommendations.

32 (j) In addition to any other applicable law, rules or regulations, the economic  
33 development planning council shall be subject to the provisions of the Open Meetings Act, title  
34 42, chapter 46 of the Rhode Island general laws, and the Public Records Act, title 38, chapter 2 of

1 the Rhode Island general laws.

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

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

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1           This act would require that a written long-term economic development vision and policy  
2   and a strategic plan for implementation of this policy receive a public hearing by the house of  
3   representatives and the senate, a vote of approval by those bodies and approval of the governor.

4           This act would take effect upon passage.

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