

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2688

To establish an Office of Economic Development Information in the Economic Development Administration.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 21, 1997

Mr. TRAFICANT introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To establish an Office of Economic Development Information in the Economic Development Administration.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Economic Development
5 Information Act of 1997”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND DECLARATION.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

8 (1) the availability of accurate and timely infor-
9 mation on economic development programs of the

1 Federal Government, States, and political subdivi-
2 sions of States, and of other data of use to public
3 officials, economic development practitioners, busi-
4 ness and community leaders, academia, and the gen-
5 eral public in their pursuit of sound economic devel-
6 opment, is essential to the maintenance of the na-
7 tional economy at a high level and to the relief of
8 those regions, counties, and communities suffering
9 substantial and persistent unemployment and under-
10 employment; and

11 (2) previous efforts of the Economic Develop-
12 ment Administration to provide such information,
13 through an Office of Economic Conversion Informa-
14 tion, have achieved success, primarily in assisting
15 communities impacted by the closing or realignment
16 of military or Department of Energy installations, or
17 the closing or downsizing of defense-related indus-
18 tries.

19 (b) DECLARATION.—Congress declares that, in fur-
20 therance of maintaining the national economy at a high
21 level—

22 (1) the provision of economic development in-
23 formation should be expanded so that such informa-
24 tion is available to assist all areas suffering from

1 economic distress or long-term economic deteriora-
2 tion; and

3 (2) such information should provide access to
4 various Governmentwide and other economic devel-
5 opment resources in such format as to be readily
6 useful to those who may have occasion to employ the
7 information for economic development purposes.

8 **SEC. 3. OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INFORMA-**
9 **TION.**

10 Title VI of the Public Works and Economic Develop-
11 ment Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3201–3204) is amended by
12 adding at the end the following:

13 **“SEC. 605. OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INFORMA-**
14 **TION.**

15 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall estab-
16 lish in the Economic Development Administration an Of-
17 fice of Economic Development Information (hereinafter in
18 this section referred to as the ‘Office’).

19 “(b) DUTIES.—The Office shall—

20 “(1) serve as a central information clearing-
21 house on matters relating to economic development
22 programs and activities of the Federal Government
23 and State governments, including political subdivi-
24 sions of States;

1 “(2) help potential and actual applicants for
2 economic development assistance under Federal,
3 State, and local laws in locating and applying for
4 such assistance, including financial and technical as-
5 sistance; and

6 “(3) develop electronic links or other connec-
7 tions to information databases provided by Federal
8 departments and agencies, State and local govern-
9 mental agencies, public and private entities, and in-
10 dividuals to assist other such agencies, entities, and
11 individuals in the process of identifying and applying
12 for assistance and resources under economic develop-
13 ment programs and activities of the Federal, State,
14 and local governments.

15 “(c) ELECTRONIC LINKS AND CONNECTIONS.—The
16 databases to which the Office shall develop electronic links
17 or other connections shall include the following kinds of
18 information:

19 “(1) Relevant information concerning available
20 economic development programs of the Federal Gov-
21 ernment, including key contact personnel, descrip-
22 tions of the application process, eligibility require-
23 ments and criteria, selection and followup proce-
24 dures, and other such relevant information.

1 “(2) Relevant information concerning major
2 State and local governmental economic development
3 programs, including lists of appropriate offices, offi-
4 cers, and contact personnel connected with, or in-
5 volved in, such programs.

6 “(3) Relevant and available economic data and
7 trends, including information about the national, re-
8 gional, and local impacts of trade agreements, de-
9 fense spending and downsizing, technological change,
10 and other sources of substantial economic disloca-
11 tion.

12 “(4) Case studies and best practices in eco-
13 nomic development, adjustment, and reinvestment.

14 “(5) Technology utilization programs, assist-
15 ance, and resources.

16 “(6) Compilations of published works (including
17 books, reports, articles, videos, and tapes), and se-
18 lected texts of such works, related to all facets of
19 economic development.

20 “(7) Information concerning current revolving
21 loan fund programs and finance programs directly
22 related to economic development objectives.

23 “(8) Resources that assist in identifying poten-
24 tial sources of capital for businesses, including re-

1 volving loan funds, venture capital, and other capital
2 tools.

3 “(9) Resources that assist economic developers
4 in understanding and pursuing sustainable develop-
5 ment and initiatives.

6 “(d) PUBLIC ACCESS TO DATA SERVICES.—The Of-
7 fice shall establish the means to ensure easy access by the
8 public to the Office’s information clearinghouse, and shall
9 take all appropriate steps to ensure that the clearinghouse
10 and its resources are as accessible, user-friendly, and cul-
11 turally neutral as possible. As soon as practicable, and
12 until replaced by a means determined by the Secretary to
13 be more effective in accomplishing the purposes of this
14 section, access to the data services of the Office shall in-
15 clude each of the following means:

16 “(1) An Internet web site, with sorted key loca-
17 tions by economic development related topics for
18 users to access lists of various Governmentwide and
19 other economic development web site resources.

20 “(2) A toll-free nationwide telephone number to
21 provide direct phone access to the public.

22 “(3) On-line electronic access through existing
23 computer network services and publicly available
24 computer database access facilities.

25 “(4) Printed manuals and orientation materials.

1 “(5) Periodic orientation workshops available to
2 the public.

3 “(6) On-call information specialists to address
4 special problems requiring person-to-person assist-
5 ance.

6 “(e) COORDINATION WITH OTHER FEDERAL DE-
7 PARTMENTS AND AGENCIES.—The Secretary shall enter
8 into such agreements and understandings as may be nec-
9 essary with other Federal departments and agencies to co-
10 ordinate the accomplishment of the objectives of this sec-
11 tion.

12 “(f) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEFINED.—In this
13 section, the term “economic development” includes eco-
14 nomic adjustment, disaster recovery, industrial retention,
15 and defense reinvestment.

16 “(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
17 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
18 such sums as may be necessary.”.

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