
HOUSE BILL 1767

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2023 Regular Session

By Representatives Barnard, Stearns, Chapman, and Volz

Read first time 02/06/23. Referred to Committee on Innovation, Community & Economic Development, & Veterans.

1 AN ACT Relating to promoting economic development by
2 strengthening the role of the department of commerce in monitoring
3 and providing technical assistance related to federal funding
4 opportunities; amending RCW 43.330.040; and creating a new section.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that recent federal
7 legislation has significantly increased federal grant opportunities.
8 Several federal laws provide funding for economic development
9 clusters that Washington state has invested in as part of an economic
10 development strategy, including broadband, clean energy, clean
11 buildings, and clean transportation. This legislation includes, but
12 is not limited to, the infrastructure investment and jobs act, P.L.
13 117-58, the creating helpful incentives to produce semiconductors
14 (chips) and science act, P.L. 117-167, and the inflation reduction
15 act, P.L. 117-169. Therefore, the legislature intends to increase the
16 capacity of the department of commerce to help the state, local
17 governments, tribes, and small businesses compete for federal grant
18 dollars, and to appropriately increase the scope of reporting from
19 the department to the legislature.

1 **Sec. 2.** RCW 43.330.040 and 2016 sp.s. c 12 s 1 are each amended
2 to read as follows:

3 (1) The director shall supervise and administer the activities of
4 the department and shall advise the governor and the legislature with
5 respect to community and economic development matters affecting the
6 state.

7 (2) In addition to other powers and duties granted to the
8 director, the director shall have the following powers and duties:

9 (a) Enter into contracts on behalf of the state to carry out the
10 purposes of this chapter;

11 (b) Act for the state in the initiation of or participation in
12 any multigovernmental program relative to the purpose of this
13 chapter;

14 (c) Accept and expend gifts and grants, whether such grants be of
15 federal or other funds;

16 (d) Appoint such deputy directors, assistant directors, and up to
17 seven special assistants as may be needed to administer the
18 department. These employees are exempt from the provisions of chapter
19 41.06 RCW;

20 (e) Prepare and submit budgets for the department for executive
21 and legislative action;

22 (f) Submit recommendations for legislative actions as are deemed
23 necessary to further the purposes of this chapter;

24 (g) Adopt rules in accordance with chapter 34.05 RCW and perform
25 all other functions necessary and proper to carry out the purposes of
26 this chapter;

27 (h) Delegate powers, duties, and functions as the director deems
28 necessary for efficient administration, but the director shall be
29 responsible for the official acts of the officers and employees of
30 the department; and

31 (i) Perform other duties as are necessary and consistent with
32 law.

33 (3) When federal or other funds are received by the department,
34 they shall be promptly transferred to the state treasurer and
35 thereafter expended only upon the approval of the director. The
36 department must track the amount of federal economic development
37 funding received and disbursed along with any required state, local,
38 or other matching requirements and annually provide the information
39 to the economic development committees of the house of
40 representatives and the senate. The department's reports to the

1 legislature must include a description of efforts made to obtain for
2 Washington state federal economic development dollars to support
3 clean energy, clean transportation, clean buildings, and broadband.
4 The reports should also advise the legislature on the scope of need
5 for technical assistance capacity in the department to serve local
6 governments, tribes, and small businesses in applying for federal
7 grants and loans.

8 (4) The director may request information and assistance from all
9 other agencies, departments, and officials of the state, and may
10 reimburse such agencies, departments, or officials if such a request
11 imposes any additional expenses upon any such agency, department, or
12 official.

13 (5) The director shall, in carrying out the responsibilities of
14 office, consult with governmental officials, private groups, and
15 individuals and with officials of other states. All state agencies
16 and their officials and the officials of any political subdivision of
17 the state shall cooperate with and give such assistance to the
18 department, including the submission of requested information, to
19 allow the department to carry out its purposes under this chapter.

20 (6) The director may establish additional advisory or
21 coordinating groups with the legislature, within state government,
22 with state and other governmental units, with the private sector and
23 nonprofit entities or in specialized subject areas as may be
24 necessary to carry out the purposes of this chapter.

25 (7) The internal affairs of the department shall be under the
26 control of the director in order that the director may manage the
27 department in a flexible and intelligent manner as dictated by
28 changing contemporary circumstances. Unless specifically limited by
29 law, the director shall have complete charge and supervisory powers
30 over the department. The director may create such administrative
31 structures as the director deems appropriate, except as otherwise
32 specified by law, and the director may employ such personnel as may
33 be necessary in accordance with chapter 41.06 RCW, except as
34 otherwise provided by law.

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