A-Bill for an Act

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. As used in sections 1 to 6 of this 2019 Act, unless the context clearly requires another meaning:

(1) “City” means a city, town or other community located in this state with a population of 2,500 or less.

(2) “District association” means Oregon’s Economic Development Districts, an organization consisting of member districts designated by the United States Economic Development Administration.

(3) “Grant administrator” means a person that provides fiscal administration, grant compliance, grant reporting and other similar administrative services required by grant-awarding entities.

(4) “Member district” means a district that is a member of Oregon’s Economic Development Districts.

(5) “Rural area” means an area located in this state that is entirely outside the acknowledged Portland Metropolitan Area Regional Urban Growth Boundary and the acknowl-
edged urban growth boundaries of all cities with populations of 30,000 or more.

(6) “Rural capacity builder” means a person that assists communities in rural areas:
   (a) To determine local priorities for community and economic development;
   (b) To develop tools, processes and partnerships to address local needs; or
   (c) By providing grant writing services.
(7) “Rural county” means a county of this state with a population of 12,000 or less.
(8) “Rural grant services” means assistance to communities in rural areas in:
   (a) Identifying funding opportunities to meet community and economic development
   needs; and
   (b) Applying for grants.
(9) “Rural jurisdictions” means:
   (a) Rural counties; and
   (b) Federally recognized Indian tribes, cities, school districts and special districts located
   in rural areas.

SECTION 2. (1) The Oregon Business Development Department shall distribute moneys
in the Oregon Rural Capacity Fund established under section 6 of this 2019 Act to provide
resources to Oregon’s Economic Development Districts for the purposes of assisting rural
jurisdictions to learn about, successfully apply for and administer grants and other forms
of funding available from any public or private source. The rural jurisdictions shall use such
resources solely to attain the staffing and financial and technical capacity necessary to carry
out proactive strategies for workforce, infrastructure, economic and community develop-
ment in the rural jurisdictions.
(2) The district association shall assist, or provide for assistance to, rural jurisdictions
by means that include, but are not limited to:
   (a) Outreach to the rural jurisdictions about grants and other forms of funding;
   (b) Employment of grant writers or grant administrators to directly assist the rural ju-
      risdictions in applying for grants and other forms of funding;
   (c) Direct assistance in administering grants awarded to the rural jurisdictions; and
   (d) Working with state agencies to coordinate investments in water and sewer systems,
      roads and other elements of basic infrastructure needed in cities in rural areas.

SECTION 3. The Oregon Business Development Department shall:
(1) Develop the policy guiding the implementation of sections 1 to 6 of this 2019 Act.
(2) Communicate the policy and the purposes set forth in section 2 of this 2019 Act to
underserved rural jurisdictions.
(3) Determine the amount of moneys available for distribution to Oregon’s Economic
Development Districts under section 2 of this 2019 Act.
(4) Consult and coordinate with the district association on the distribution of moneys
under section 2 of this 2019 Act. When consulting with the district association on the use
of moneys, the department and the district association shall consider:
   (a) Which rural jurisdictions are most in need of the assistance provided under sections
1 to 6 of this 2019 Act; and
   (b) The geographical balance of the distributions and assistance.
(5) Work with the district association to determine the number and location of the grant
writers and rural capacity builders to be hired with the moneys distributed.
(6) Make the distributions under section 2 of this 2019 Act in accordance with the policy
and priorities developed under this section from moneys in the Oregon Rural Capacity Fund established under section 6 of this 2019 Act.

(7) Oversee the rural grant services provided under sections 1 to 6 of this 2019 Act.

(8) Periodically consult with the League of Oregon Cities, the Association of Oregon Counties, the Oregon School Boards Association and the Special Districts Association of Oregon on the implementation of sections 1 to 6 of this 2019 Act.

SECTION 4. (1) This section applies to a member district that receives moneys pursuant to section 2 of this 2019 Act.

(2)(a) The member district shall expend the moneys solely to provide grant writing, grant administration, rural grant and rural capacity building services to rural jurisdictions for the purposes set forth in section 2 of this 2019 Act.

(b) The moneys received by the member district, and the activities of the member district in expending the moneys, shall supplement and may not supplant the resources and activities of the member district.

(c) The member district may not use moneys received pursuant to section 2 of this 2019 Act to apply for grants for purposes unrelated to the purposes set forth in section 2 of this 2019 Act.

(d) For purposes of a member district’s assistance to rural jurisdictions under this section, the Oregon Business Development Department may enter into an agreement with a regional solutions advisory committee appointed pursuant to ORS 284.754 for a region in which the member district is located in order to coordinate the activities of the member district, including the use of the moneys distributed to the member district, and the regional solutions team for the region.

(e) The member district shall manage, document and submit quarterly reports to the department about the assistance the member district provides to rural jurisdictions under this section. The reports shall contain at a minimum all applicable information required under section 5 (2) of this 2019 Act.

(3)(a) The member district may hire an individual under this section as an employee or an independent contractor.

(b) The member district may assign individuals hired under this section to provide the services described in subsection (2)(a) of this section to more than one rural jurisdiction.

SECTION 5. (1) Not later than September 15 of each year, the Oregon Business Development Department shall provide a brief report, in the manner required under ORS 192.245, to the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly related to economic development, that describes the activities that Oregon’s Economic Development Districts engaged in for the previous 12-month period under sections 1 to 6 of this 2019 Act and the results of those activities.

(2) At a minimum, the report required under this section shall identify:

(a) The rural jurisdictions that requested assistance funded by the district association;

(b) The rural jurisdictions that received such assistance;

(c) The populations served by the rural jurisdictions that requested assistance funded by the district association;

(d) The populations served by the rural jurisdictions that received such assistance;

(e) The number of funding opportunities, and the dollar amount of private and public funds, separately stated, that the rural jurisdictions applied for with assistance funded by the
district association;

(f) The number of funding opportunities from which the rural jurisdictions received
funding with such assistance, and the dollar amount of private and public funding so re-
ceived, separately stated;

(g) The multiplier effects of grants and other forms of funding received by the rural ju-
risdictions with assistance funded by the district association;

(h) The expected effect of grants and other forms of funding received by the rural juris-
dictions with assistance funded by the district association on the timing of the commence-
ment and completion of projects;

(i) The number of jobs created by rural jurisdictions that received assistance under
sections 1 to 6 of this 2019 Act;

(j) The return on investment of moneys distributed to member districts under section 2
of this 2019 Act; and

(k) Any other information the department considers important to include in the report.

SECTION 6. (1) The Oregon Rural Capacity Fund is established in the State Treasury,
separate and distinct from the General Fund. Interest earned by the Oregon Rural Capacity
Fund shall be credited to the fund.

(2) Moneys in the fund consist of:

(a) Amounts appropriated or otherwise transferred or credited to the fund by the Legis-
lative Assembly;

(b) Moneys from the federal government, state agencies or local governments transferred
or otherwise credited to the fund;

(c) Amounts donated or otherwise given to the fund;

(d) Earnings received on moneys in the fund; and

(e) Other amounts from any source transferred or otherwise credited to the fund.

(3)(a) Moneys in the fund are continuously appropriated to the Oregon Business Devel-
opment Department for the purpose of making the expenditures set forth in this subsection.

(b) The department may retain an amount equal to five percent of moneys appropriated
or otherwise transferred or credited to the fund to pay the for the administrative and oper-
ational expenses of department under sections 1 to 6 of this 2019 Act.

(c) The department shall distribute the balance of the moneys in accordance with section
2 of this 2019 Act.

SECTION 7. There is appropriated to the Oregon Business Development Department, for
the biennium beginning July 1, 2019, out of the General Fund, the amount of $918,750, to be
expended in accordance with sections 1 to 6 of this 2019 Act.

SECTION 8. (1) Sections 1 to 6 of this 2019 Act become operative on January 1, 2020.

(2)(a) As used in this subsection, “person” means each of:

(A) The Director of the Oregon Business Development Department; and

(B) Oregon’s Economic Development Districts.

(b) Notwithstanding the date specified in subsection (1) of this section, a person may take
any action before the date specified in subsection (1) of this section that is necessary for the
person to exercise, on and after the date specified in subsection (1) of this section, all of the
duties, functions and powers respectively conferred on the person by sections 1 to 6 of this
2019 Act.

SECTION 9. This 2019 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public
peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2019 Act takes effect on its passage.