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1 IN THE HOUSE

BY THE COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL
AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

2 SENATE CS FOR CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 932 am S

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 ELEVENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5 A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act creating the Rural Development Council; and
7 providing for an effective date."

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

9 * Section 1. FINDINGS; POLICY, PURPOSE. (a) The legislature finds that
10 there is a public interest in the development of a healthy private economic
11 base in rural Alaska, that the rural areas of the state and the many small
12 communities of the state have been in economic crisis for decades, and that
13 in many rural communities a private economic base has ceased to exist which
14 conditions endanger the economic, social, and cultural well-being of the
15 state's rural citizens and the healthy growth and balance of the state's
16 entire economy. The legislature further finds that while many opportunities
17 for economic growth may be available to rural areas, the problems of the
18 state's rural areas are many and complex, spreading beyond the confines or
19 authority of any one program, any one government, or any one policymaker and
20 therefore requiring a special initiative on the part of all concerned par-
21 ties.

22 (b) It is the policy of the legislature that

23 (1) villages and small communities should have access to economic
24 development opportunities;

25 (2) there is a special commitment to the development of a private
26 economic base for villages and small communities;

27 (3) the state should use its resources and financial strength to
28 encourage the development of a healthy, self-sustaining rural economy;

29 (4) the state has the primary policy responsibility to act and to

1 catalyze commitment among many interests, including the state, federal govern-
2 ment, local governments, and the private sector to promote a private economy
3 in rural areas;

4 (5) the advocacy of a private economy compatible with preservation
5 of the subsistence economy should be one of the highest priorities of state
6 policy.

7 (c) It is the purpose of this Act to create a governmental structure
8 that will function as an advocate of rural areas and small communities pre-
9 senting development issues before state, federal, and local governments, and
10 in the private sectors, and which will assist rural people and institutions
11 in laying the foundations of a healthy rural private economic base.

12 * Sec. 2. AS 44.19 is amended by adding new sections to read:

13 ARTICLE 3C. RURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL.

14 Sec. 44.19.191. COUNCIL ESTABLISHED. (a) There is established in
15 the Department of Community and Regional Affairs the Rural Development
16 Council. The council consists of

17 (1) a person appointed by the governor and designated as
18 chairman of the council;

19 (2) a member of each house of the legislature appointed by
20 the presiding officer of that house;

21 (3) the commissioners of the departments of transportation
22 and public facilities, commerce and economic development, and community
23 and regional affairs, and the director of the division of policy de-
24 velopment and planning;

25 (4) six representatives of the private sector appointed by
26 the governor who are residents of the rural area or small communities;

27 (5) the Alaska state director of the Farmers Home Administra-
28 tion of the United States Department of Agriculture, the Special Assis-
29 tant to the Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior in

1 Alaska, and a designated representative of the Region X Rural Develop-
2 ment Task Force, who are ex officio members of the council and may
3 attend and participate in all meetings of the council but may not vote.

4 (b) The members of the council appointed by the governor serve at
5 the pleasure of the governor.

6 (c) The council may invite representatives from state and federal
7 agencies, local governments, or other groups and interested individuals
8 to participate as nonvoting participants as the council considers appro-
9 priate.

10 (d) The chairman of the council is the person designated by the
11 governor as chairman. The chairman may appoint a vice-chairman.

12 (e) Members of the council serve without compensation but are
13 entitled to per diem and travel expenses provided by law for members of
14 boards and commissions.

15 Sec. 44.19.201. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. The Executive Director shall
16 be appointed by the Governor.

17 Sec. 44.19.211. POLICY AND COORDINATION. The council shall pro-
18 vide policy recommendations to the legislature and to the governor. The
19 chairman of the council shall assist the director in coordinating the
20 economic development activities of all departments and agencies of
21 government so that the need for those activities and the impact of those
22 activities on small communities and rural areas is considered and assist
23 in coordinating the activities of departments and agencies of government
24 which have field responsibilities in the rural areas to the extent that
25 those activities relate to economic development. The chairman shall
26 also assist the governor in his advocacy function.

27 Sec. 44.19.216. MEETINGS. The council shall meet at the call of
28 the governor or the chairman or at the request of a majority of the
29 members. The council shall meet at least four times a year at a regu-

1 larly scheduled time as determined by the members. The council may
2 convene meetings of heads of agencies or departments which are concerned
3 with rural matters or economic development if the council determines a
4 meeting to be useful.

5 Sec. 44.19.221. POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE COUNCIL. The council
6 shall

7 (1) investigate and assess rural conditions;

8 (2) act as advocate for the development of an economic base
9 which is compatible with preservation of the subsistence economy in
10 rural Alaska, for community development and for public services which
11 will enhance the opportunity for growth of an economic base in small
12 communities and rural Alaska, and for other matters and programs useful
13 to development of the private economy in rural Alaska;

14 (3) develop and recommend to the governor and the legislature
15 rural development goals and policies;

16 (4) recommend to the governor and the legislature activities,
17 programs, projects, or strategies which will stimulate rural development
18 in Alaska in accordance with adopted state rural development policies;

19 (5) recommend to the governor and the legislature the most
20 effective uses of available federal money to implement the priorities
21 itemized in (4) of this section;

22 (6) assist in the interagency and intergovernmental coordina-
23 tion of economic development issues, activities, and projects in Alaska;

24 (7) submit to the governor, within one year of the effective
25 date of this Act and on a yearly basis thereafter, a report containing
26 a summary of the council's activities regarding the duties under (1),
27 (3), (4), (11), and (12) of this section and making recommendations as
28 to future rural development activities;

29 (8) act as advocate for rural development programs which are

1 not within the jurisdiction of a specific department or agency;

2 (9) act as advocate for appropriate technology development
3 and the advancement of entrepreneurial opportunities;

4 (10) encourage and assist in the creation and use of regional
5 development enterprises;

6 (11) identify opportunities for joint investment strategies;

7 (12) facilitate rural development efforts approved by the
8 governor by

9 (A) identifying interagency or intergovernmental pro-
10 cedural obstacles and providing assistance to these efforts in
11 meeting legal requirements;

12 (B) coordinating technical and financial assistance
13 efforts;

14 (C) offering its services as a mediator on specific
15 conflicts arising in rural development issues.

16 Sec. 44.19.226. REPORTS. Before January 15 of each year the
17 council shall submit to the legislature a comprehensive report de-
18 scribing the activities of the council for the preceding year.

19 Sec. 44.19.231. DEFINITIONS. In AS 44.19.191 - 44.19.231

20 (1) "council" means the Rural Development Council;

21 (2) "director" means the executive director of the Rural De-
22 velopment Council.

23 * Sec. 3. AS 44.66.010(a) is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

24 (8) Rural Development Council (AS 44.19.191 - 44.19.231) --
25 June 30, 1987.

26 * Sec. 4. This Act takes effect immediately in accordance with AS 01.10.-
27 070(c).

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