

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
NINETY-NINTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 273

Introduced by Cunningham, 40; Bourne, 8; Combs, 32; Connealy, 16;
Erdman, 47; Kremer, 34; McDonald, 41; Stuhr, 24

Read first time January 10, 2005

Committee: Government, Military and Veterans Affairs

A BILL

- 1 FOR AN ACT relating to economic development; to adopt the Building
- 2 Entrepreneurial Communities Act.
- 3 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as
2 the Building Entrepreneurial Communities Act.

3 Sec. 2. The purpose of the Building Entrepreneurial
4 Communities Act is to support economically depressed rural areas of
5 Nebraska in building entrepreneurial communities through grants
6 that will create community capacity to build and sustain programs
7 to generate and retain wealth in the community and region.
8 Specifically, the act will:

9 (1) Provide education and technical assistance to
10 energize small business development and entrepreneurship;

11 (2) Provide technical assistance to facilitate small
12 business transfer;

13 (3) Build community capacity and leadership programs;

14 (4) Generate opportunities that will attract and retain
15 young people and families;

16 (5) Provide education about philanthropy and
17 intergenerational transfer of wealth; and

18 (6) Build community endowments to support these
19 activities.

20 Sec. 3. (1) The Rural Development Commission, with
21 assistance provided by the Department of Economic Development,
22 shall establish and administer a grant process to provide grants to
23 two or more political subdivisions that are collaborating on a
24 project related to the purpose of the Building Entrepreneurial
25 Communities Act with priority given to projects that best alleviate
26 the situations described in this section. At least one of the
27 collaborating political subdivisions shall have:

28 (a) Chronic economic distress, which means:

1 (i) An unemployment rate which exceeds the statewide
2 average unemployment rate; or

3 (ii) A per capita income below the statewide average per
4 capita income; or

5 (b) Severe historical population loss, which means a
6 population loss of ten percent or more over a twenty-year period of
7 time.

8 (2) Grants shall not exceed seventy-five thousand dollars
9 per collaborative project. Grant recipients shall have five years
10 to expend the grant funds. No political subdivision shall receive
11 funding for more than one project. Grant recipients shall provide
12 a dollar-for-dollar match in money or in-kind contributions for
13 grant funds. Grants shall be awarded directly to one of the
14 political subdivisions representing the collaborative project. The
15 department shall act as the fiduciary agent for the grants.

16 (3) The Legislature shall appropriate one million dollars
17 for each of fiscal years 2005-06 and 2006-07 to carry out the act.