

House Bill 3104

Sponsored by Representative OWENS (Pre-session filed.)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**. The statement includes a measure digest written in compliance with applicable readability standards.

Digest: The Act would have Business Oregon set up a resource center to help rural areas of this state apply for grants and manage grant funds. (Flesch Readability Score: 63.0).

Directs the Oregon Business Development Department to enter into an agreement with a nonprofit organization or local government association to serve as a statewide rural community resource center. Requires the center to provide technical assistance to rural jurisdictions to assist them with developing and submitting proposals for public and private awards and to manage funds that are awarded as a result.

Declares an emergency, effective on passage.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1
2 Relating to rural community resources; and declaring an emergency.

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

4 **SECTION 1. (1) As used in sections 1 to 3 of this 2025 Act:**

5 (a) **"Nonprofit organization" means an entity:**

6 (A) **Organized not for profit, pursuant to ORS chapter 65 or any predecessor or successor**
7 **of ORS chapter 65; or**

8 (B) **Described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code that is exempt from in-**
9 **come tax under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code.**

10 (b) **"Rural" means located entirely outside the acknowledged Portland Metropolitan Area**
11 **Regional Urban Growth Boundary and the acknowledged urban growth boundaries of all**
12 **cities with populations of 30,000 or more.**

13 (c) **"Service jurisdiction" means:**

14 (A) **Rural cities and counties;**

15 (B) **Economic development districts as defined in ORS 285B.636 other than the Greater**
16 **Portland, Inc.—Portland-Vancouver Economic Development District; and**

17 (C) **Regional councils of government other than Metro.**

18 (2)(a) **The Oregon Business Development Department shall select an entity to serve as a**
19 **statewide rural community resource center with the duties and powers set forth in this**
20 **section and section 2 of this 2025 Act.**

21 (b) **The entity shall be:**

22 (A) **A nonprofit organization that specializes in public-private partnerships; or**

23 (B) **A statewide local government association of cities or counties.**

24 (3)(a) **The department shall prescribe by rule an application process for the selection of**
25 **the entity, including the forms, the information and materials to be included with applica-**
26 **tions and the deadlines.**

27 (b) **Upon approval of an application, the department shall negotiate an agreement with**

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 the entity under which the entity shall perform the duties and exercise the powers assigned
2 to it as the rural community resource center under law and the agreement.

3 (4)(a) The rural community resource center shall provide technical assistance to service
4 jurisdictions that lack staff capacity and expertise to:

5 (A) Develop plans for community facilities, infrastructure, revitalization, housing and
6 economic development;

7 (B) Develop and submit proposals for any public and private awards to fund such plans,
8 including but not limited to grants; and

9 (C) Manage the funds awarded them to carry out the plans.

10 (b) The rural community resource center shall have a staff of seven professionals, each
11 of whom provides the technical assistance described in paragraph (a) of this subsection in
12 one of the following areas:

13 (A) Public works.

14 (B) Engineering.

15 (C) Community development.

16 (D) Housing.

17 (E) Transportation.

18 (F) Project management.

19 (G) Public administration and finance.

20 (c) In addition to providing the technical assistance described in this subsection, the ru-
21 ral community resource center shall:

22 (A) Serve as a hub for funding and resources available to service jurisdictions.

23 (B) Provide a network to connect service jurisdictions to resources for project develop-
24 ment, grant writing and management assistance.

25 (C) Support leaders of service jurisdictions in establishing priorities for plans described
26 in subsection (4)(a)(A) of this section.

27 (D) Connect service jurisdictions with regional intermediaries that also provide such
28 technical assistance.

29 (E) Research the gaps in public and civic investment systems and identify opportunities
30 for improvement and leverage.

31 **SECTION 2.** (1)(a) The rural community resource center described in section 1 of this
32 2025 Act shall use moneys available in the Rural Community Resource Leverage Fund es-
33 tablished under section 3 of this 2025 Act to assist service jurisdictions in developing and
34 submitting proposals for public and private awards, including but not limited to grants, to
35 fund plans described in section 1 (4)(a)(A) of this 2025 Act.

36 (b) In awarding assistance grants under this section, the rural community resource
37 center shall give preference to proposals to obtain public or private grants or other awards
38 that require matching funds.

39 (2) The center may also use moneys in the fund to directly seek public and private awards
40 for deposit in the fund.

41 **SECTION 3.** (1) There is established in the State Treasury, separate and distinct from the
42 General Fund, the Rural Community Resource Leverage Fund. All moneys in the fund are
43 continuously appropriated to the Oregon Business Development Department for distribution
44 to the entity selected by the department under section 1 of this 2025 Act to serve as the rural
45 community resource center. The center may use the moneys solely to fund:

1 (a) The activities of the professional staff described in section 1 (4)(b) of this 2025 Act
2 and other operating expenses of the center; and

3 (b) The uses specified in section 2 of this 2025 Act.

4 (2) The Rural Community Resource Leverage Fund shall consist of:

5 (a) Moneys appropriated or otherwise allocated or transferred to the fund by the Legis-
6 lative Assembly or the department;

7 (b) Interest earned on moneys in the fund; and

8 (c) Moneys or property, or the proceeds of property, of any kind received from any public
9 or private source by the department or the center for deposit in the fund.

10 **SECTION 4.** In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropri-
11 ated to the Oregon Business Development Department, for the biennium beginning July 1,
12 2025, out of the General Fund, the amount of \$6,000,000, to be distributed to the entity se-
13 lected by the department under section 1 of this 2025 Act to serve as the rural community
14 resource center, as follows:

15 (1) \$3,000,000 for the activities of the professional staff described in section 1 (4)(b) of this
16 2025 Act and other operating expenses of the center; and

17 (2) \$3,000,000 for the uses specified in section 2 of this 2025 Act.

18 **SECTION 5.** This 2025 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public
19 peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2025 Act takes effect
20 on its passage.

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