

No. 1996-106

AN ACT

HB 100

Providing for a Pennsylvania Business Resource Center within the Department of Commerce; and creating the Pennsylvania Business Resource Center Advisory Board.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. Short title.

This act shall be known and may be cited as the Pennsylvania Business Resource Center Act.

Section 2. Intent and purpose.

It is the intent of this act and its purpose shall be:

(1) To create a partnership of State government, private industry, organized labor and higher education to enhance business development in this Commonwealth.

(2) To provide for the collection and coordination of all relevant information regarding the location, development and expansion of business and industry in this Commonwealth and to provide for the innovative display of this information to businesses and industries.

(3) To provide a centralized, multimedia facility for businesses to meet with representatives of the Commonwealth and the utility, transportation and other companies who would provide services to them should the businesses locate in this Commonwealth.

(4) To provide one-stop services to assist businesses in identifying and securing appropriate permits needed to establish and operate a business.

(5) To provide for the compilation of a comprehensive listing of all permits required by Commonwealth agencies and categorize the required permits into a comprehensive handbook that is readily available to persons establishing a small business.

(6) To provide for the facilitation of contacts for an applicant with the Commonwealth agency responsible for the review of the respective permit applications.

Section 3. Definitions.

The following words and phrases when used in this act shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

“Board.” The Pennsylvania Business Resource Center Advisory Board.

“Center.” The Pennsylvania Business Resource Center.

“Department.” The Department of Commerce of the Commonwealth.

Section 4. The Pennsylvania Business Resource Center.

(a) Establishment.—The Pennsylvania Business Resource Center is established within the Department of Commerce.

(b) Coordination.—The department shall coordinate with other governmental entities, businesses, economic development organizations and academic institutions to develop a business resource center.

(c) Contribution.—The center is authorized to accept contributions, including money, tangible and intangible property and other items of value, from other governmental entities, businesses, economic development organizations and charitable and academic institutions for the purpose of building and operating a business resource center.

(d) Contract.—The department may contract, directly or through another entity, for the development and operation, in whole or in part, of the center.

Section 5. Pennsylvania Business Resource Center Advisory Board.

(a) Establishment.—There is hereby established within the department an advisory board known as the Pennsylvania Business Resource Center Advisory Board.

(b) Membership.—The board shall consist of 16 members as follows:

(1) The Secretary of Commerce or his designee.

(2) One member appointed by the Majority Leader of the Senate.

(3) One member appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate.

(4) One member appointed by the Majority Leader of the House of Representatives.

(5) One member appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives.

(6) Two members appointed by the Governor representing higher education.

(7) Two members appointed by the Governor representing business or industry.

(8) Two members appointed by the Governor representing economic development organizations.

(9) Two members appointed by the Governor representing organized labor.

(10) One member, appointed by the Governor, who shall be a president of a community college which has strong technical and occupational programs.

(11) Two at-large members appointed by the Governor.

(c) Chairperson.—The Secretary of Commerce or his designee shall serve as the chairperson. The board may elect additional officers as it deems necessary.

(d) Terms.—Members shall serve without compensation at the pleasure of the respective appointing authority.

(e) Expenses.—The members of the board shall receive no salary but shall be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

Section 6. Powers and duties of board.

The board shall have the power and its duty shall be:

(1) To advise the Governor and General Assembly on ways to promote this Commonwealth as a location for the expansion of business and industry.

(2) To provide a state-of-the-art information and computer system to supply businesses with all relevant information regarding available sites and other relevant business information relating to a business facility and a suitable environment for meeting and presenting the information to business representatives.

(3) To make recommendations to the Governor on the organization, ownership and management of the center, to include public and private financing and participation, future composition and status of the board, potential sites for the center, computer systems, consultants, staff, contractors and other services needed to establish the business resource center.

(4) To gather information, issue reports, develop marketing material and perform other activities as needed to carry out the mission of the center and the purposes of this act.

(5) To monitor the success of the center in attracting prospective businesses to this Commonwealth.

(6) To solicit funds from the private sector for the purposes of renovation, construction or operation of the center.

(7) To make a budget recommendation to the Governor.

Section 7. Report.

Before April 1, 1997, the board shall present to the Governor and the General Assembly a report of its findings and recommendations regarding the establishment and operation of the Pennsylvania Business Resource Center, to include a recommendation as to whether the board should become a private corporate body.

Section 8. Expiration.

The Pennsylvania Business Resource Center Advisory Board and Pennsylvania Business Resource Center shall expire on June 30, 1997, unless continued by the General Assembly.

Section 9. Effective date.

This act shall take effect in 30 days.

APPROVED—The 11th day of July, A.D. 1996.

THOMAS J. RIDGE