To: Finance

MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE                        REGULAR SESSION 2001

By: Senator(s) Farris

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SENATE BILL NO. 2917

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

SECTION 1. This act shall be known as the Smart Growth

Economic Development Infrastructure Act.

SECTION 2. (1) As used in this act:

(a) "Fund" means the Smart Growth Economic Development

Infrastructure Fund established pursuant to this section.

(b) "Qualified distressed county" means a county that

has developed in consultation with the municipalities located

within the county and submitted to the executive director a local

strategic plan for economic development that has been approved by

the executive director and:

(i) For which the average rate of unemployment for

the most recent eighteen-month period for which data are

available, is greater than one hundred fifty percent (150%) of the

average rate of unemployment for the entire state during that same

period; or

(ii) For which the average per capita personal

income for the most recent twenty-four-month period for which data

are available is equal to or less than sixty-seven percent (67%)
of the average personal per capita income for the entire state
during that same period.

(c) "Executive director" means the executive director
of the Mississippi Development Authority.

(d) "MDA" means the Mississippi Development Authority.

SECTION 3. (1) There is established the Smart Growth
Economic Development Infrastructure Program for the purposes of
providing financial assistance to counties as provided in this
section. Assistance under this program shall consist of loans
from the fund or loans from the fund that are convertible in whole
or in part to a grant upon the satisfaction of specified
conditions, all upon terms specified by MDA.

(2) Except as otherwise provided in this section, the
executive director may approve financial assistance from the fund
to a qualified distressed county for the purposes of financing the
costs of acquisition, improvements and rehabilitation of land for
industrial sites and parks, development of water and sewer lines,
shell building, infrastructure serving existing retail and office
oriented center occupying at least four hundred thousand (400,000)square feet on a limited basis of no more than one (1) per
jurisdiction, and other needed infrastructure projects.

(3) (a) In addition to any other requirement for an
application for financial assistance under this section, an
application for financial assistance under this section shall
include for each project:

(i) A marketing plan designed to market the
project to prospective businesses and a statement of planned
marketing expenditures as a percent of the total financial
assistance amount requested; and

(ii) A site plan for the project that is
consistent with the county's local strategic economic development
plan as to the location and type of project.
(b) The executive director may not approve financial assistance for a project under this act unless he approves the marketing plan and site plan for the project submitted with the application.

(4) (a) Each loan agreement under this section shall include a provision for repayment of principal to begin only after the project is initially occupied.

(b) The executive director may include in a loan agreement under this section a provision for payment of interest to begin only after the project is initially occupied.

(c) All payment of principal or interest on any loan made pursuant to this act shall be deposited into the fund.

(5) The qualified or distressed county or municipality applying for assistance shall:

(a) Certify that it supports the project and that the proposed financial assistance is consistent with the qualified distressed county's plan for economic development; and

(b) Provide to MDA details of the qualified distressed county's support for participation in the project.

(6) In approving financial assistance, the executive director shall consider the aggregate amount of financial assistance that may already have been provided for a particular qualified distressed county under this section and under any other state economic development program to ensure that no particular qualified distressed county benefits disproportionately from financial assistance under this section.

(7) MDA may develop a local strategic plan for economic development in a qualified distressed county in consultation with a municipal corporation in that county if:

(a) The qualified distressed county has not developed a local strategic plan for economic development; or
ST: Economic development; create the Smart Growth Economic Development Infrastructure Act.

SECTION 4. There is created in the State Treasury a special fund to be known as Smart Growth Economic Development Infrastructure Fund into which shall be deposited any money designate for deposit therein and any repayment of principal and interest on loans made pursuant to the provisions of this act. Money in the fund shall be used for the purposes provided for in this act. The fund shall be administered by MDA and money in the fund shall be expended upon appropriation by the Legislature. Unexpended amounts remaining in the fund at the end of the state fiscal year shall not lapse into the State General Fund, and any interest earned on amounts in the fund shall be deposited to the credit of the fund.

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2001