

AN ACT concerning community revitalization.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,  
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the  
Community Self-Revitalization Act.

Section 5. Findings and purpose.

(a) The General Assembly finds that:

(1) There is a great need for economic revitalization  
in many communities throughout this State.

(2) Each community has valuable resources at its  
fingertips that can be tapped in the revitalization  
process.

(3) With adequate support and assistance from the State  
and other resources, each community can participate in and  
shepherd its own economic renewal.

(4) Successful redevelopment plans are based on policy  
that is responsive to the existing composition and  
character of the economically distressed community and  
that allows and compels the community to participate in the  
redevelopment planning process.

(5) A successful redevelopment initiative creates and  
maintains a capable and adaptable workforce, has access to  
capital, has a sound fiscal base, has adequate

infrastructure, has well-managed natural resources, and has an attractive quality of life.

(b) It is the purpose of this legislation to provide a mechanism for an economically distressed community to use in its efforts to revitalize the community.

Section 10. Definitions. As used in this Section:

"Community" means a municipality or a county with respect to the unincorporated areas of a county.

"Department" means the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

"Economically distressed community" means (i) in the case of a municipality with a population of 25,000 or more, the municipality is certified by the Department as being in the highest 10% of all municipalities of 25,000 or more in the State in its average annual total unemployment rate for the last completed calendar year and its poverty rate, pursuant to the most recent U.S. census data available or (ii) in the case of a municipality with a population of less than 25,000 or an unincorporated area, a municipality or unincorporated area that is located at least partly in a county that is certified by the Department as being in the highest 10% of all counties in its average annual total unemployment rate for the last completed calendar year and its poverty rate, pursuant to the most recent U.S. census data available.

Section 15. Certification; Board of Economic Advisors.

(a) In order to receive the assistance as provided in this Act, a community shall first, by ordinance passed by its corporate authorities, request that the Department certify that it is an economically distressed community. The community must submit a certified copy of the ordinance to the Department. After review of the ordinance, if the Department determines that the community meets the requirements for certification, the Department may certify the community as an economically distressed community.

(b) A community that is certified by the Department as an economically distressed community may appoint a Board of Economic Advisors to create and implement a revitalization plan for the community. The Board shall consist of 18 members of the community, appointed by the mayor or the presiding officer of the county or jointly by the presiding officers of each municipality and county that have joined to form a community for the purposes of this Act. Up to 18 Board members may be appointed from the following vital sectors:

- (1) A member representing households and families.
- (2) A member representing religious organizations.
- (3) A member representing educational institutions.
- (4) A member representing daycare centers, care centers for the handicapped, and care centers for the disadvantaged.
- (5) A member representing community based

organizations such as neighborhood improvement associations.

(6) A member representing federal and State employment service systems, skill training centers, and placement referrals.

(7) A member representing Masonic organizations, fraternities, sororities, and social clubs.

(8) A member representing hospitals, nursing homes, senior citizens, public health agencies, and funeral homes.

(9) A member representing organized sports, parks, parties, and games of chance.

(10) A member representing political parties, clubs, and affiliations, and election related matters concerning voter education and participation.

(11) A member representing the cultural aspects of the community, including cultural events, lifestyles, languages, music, visual and performing arts, and literature.

(12) A member representing police and fire protection agencies, prisons, weapons systems, and the military industrial complex.

(13) A member representing local businesses.

(14) A member representing the retail industry.

(15) A member representing the service industry.

(16) A member representing the industrial, production,

and manufacturing sectors.

(17) A member representing the advertising and marketing industry.

(18) A member representing the technology services industry.

The Board shall meet initially within 30 days of its appointment, shall select one member as chairperson at its initial meeting, and shall thereafter meet at the call of the chairperson. Members of the Board shall serve without compensation.

(c) One third of the initial appointees shall serve for 2 years, one third shall serve for 3 years, and one third shall serve for 4 years, as determined by lot. Subsequent appointees shall serve terms of 5 years.

(d) The Board shall create a 3-year to 5-year revitalization plan for the community. The plan shall contain distinct, measurable objectives for revitalization. The objectives shall be used to guide ongoing implementation of the plan and to measure progress during the 3-year to 5-year period. The Board shall work in a dynamic manner defining goals for the community based on the strengths and weaknesses of the individual sectors of the community as presented by each member of the Board. The Board shall meet periodically and revise the plan in light of the input from each member of the Board concerning his or her respective sector of expertise. The process shall be a community driven revitalization process,

with community-specific data determining the direction and scope of the revitalization.

Section 20. Action by the Board.

(a) Organize. The Board shall first assess the needs and the resources of the community operating from the basic premise that the family unit is the primary unit of community and that the demand for goods and services from this residential sector is the main source of recovery and growth for the redevelopment of a community. The Board shall inventory community assets, including the condition of the family with respect to the role of the family as workers, consumers, and investors. The Board shall inventory the type and viability of businesses and industries currently in the community. In compiling the inventory, the Board shall rely on the input of each Board member with respect to his or her expertise in a given sector of the revitalization plan.

(b) Revitalize. In implementing the revitalization plan, the Board shall focus on and build from existing resources in the community, growing existing businesses rather than luring business into the community from the outside. The Board shall also focus on the residents themselves rather than jobs. The Board shall promote investment in training residents in areas that will lead to employment and in turn will bring revenue into the community.

(c) Mobilize. The Board shall engage in the dynamic process

of community self-revitalization through a continuous reassessment of the needs of the community in the revitalization process. As each goal of the 3-year to 5-year plan is achieved, the Board shall draw from the resources of its members to establish new goals and implement new strategies employing the lessons learned in the earlier stages of revitalization.

(d) Advise. The Board shall act as the liaison between the community and the local, county, and State Government. The Board shall make use of the resources of these governmental entities and shall provide counsel to each of these bodies with respect to economic development.

The Board shall also act as a liaison between private business entities located in the community and the community itself. The Board shall offer advice and assistance to these entities when requested and provide incentives and support, both economic and otherwise, to facilitate expansion and further investment in the community by the businesses.

The Board shall annually submit a report to the General Assembly and the Governor summarizing the accomplishments of the community concerning revitalization and the goals of the community for future revitalization.

Section 25. Funding sources. Subject to appropriation, the Department may make grants to communities that are certified as economically distressed communities under this Act and that

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create a Board of Economic Advisors under this Act for the operational expenses of the Board. The procedures for grant application shall be established by the Department by rule.

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon becoming law.