

REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES

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Summer 2001



RURAL JOB CREATION LEGISLATION BECOMES LAW

Florida's rural job creation efforts got a boost beginning July 1 when a new law took effect. The economic development legislation (HB1225) will make Florida's rural areas more competitive with the rest of the state in attracting businesses.

The legislation also authorizes an increase in the Qualified Target Industry (QTI) Tax Refund Program commitment "cap" from \$30 to \$35 million. The QTI program is used to encourage business expansion. The program has helped attract 288 businesses, create 65,880 jobs, and cause over \$5 billion in private capital investments in the state since its inception in 1995.

The rural economic development portion of HB1225 is a product derived from several years of discussions and efforts among leaders from Florida's rural communities. All levels of economic development practitioners from local and regional economic development organizations, such as the North Central Florida Economic Development Partnership, to the Florida Chamber of Commerce and the Florida Economic Development Council rallied to support the increase of the QTI cap.

The legislation was also supported by the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) led by the Rural Issues Working Group of Enterprise Florida, and supported by the Governor's Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development (OTTED).

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ADCO NEWS

The North Central Florida Areawide Development Co., Inc. (ADCO) was recently honored at the Small Business Administration's Annual Florida Lenders Conference in Clearwater Beach as the first recipient of the Timothy J. McDowell Memorial Award for Excellence, in memory of Mr. McDowell, who passed away last year.



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Rural Job Creation Legislation Becomes Law
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Specifically the law:

- Expands the list of businesses eligible for the Rural Job Tax Credit. It also adds communities in Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern to the list of areas where the credit is available.
- Creates Rural Enterprise Zones. Currently the Zones in rural areas are limited to five square miles. The new law increases the size to 20 square miles, which gives local communities flexibility in putting the zone area where the businesses are most likely to locate.
- Raises the QTI cap from \$30 to \$35 million to encourage more businesses to locate to Florida, creating more jobs for all Floridians.

The QTI tax refund has proven to be a significant tool available to Florida communities to encourage high wage job growth in targeted industries, and it is one of the state's most important and successful incentive programs. If approved for the program, applicants receive tax refunds for jobs created (\$3,000 tax refund per job up to \$6,000 in a rural area). The jobs created must exceed the average annual wage, and no refunds are provided until new jobs are actually created and taxes have already been paid into the tax base.

The increase in the QTI cap was critical for continuation of the program beyond tax refunds already committed to business currently in the program. The Governor's Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development (OTTED), which administers the program, would have reached the current \$30 million cap in January, 2002. The commitment cap increase allows Enterprise Florida and its economic development partners to continue using the QTI program to attract new jobs to Florida.

BIKE MAPS

With grant money from the **Florida Department of Transportation**, the **North Central Florida Regional Planning Council** developed and printed four on-road bicycle maps for *The Original Florida* region.



These maps cover: **Alachua/Bradford/Union, Columbia/Hamilton/Suwannee, Dixie/Levy/Gilchrist, and Madison/Lafayette/Taylor.** To obtain your copy(ies), contact the **Council** at **352/955-2200** or **Email: ncfrpc@ncfrpc.org**.

**NCFRPC SERVICES
AVAILABLE TO LOCAL
GOVERNMENTS AND
BUSINESSES**

- local comprehensive plans
- land development regulations
- transportation plans
- transportation disadvantaged plans
- disaster mitigation and recovery plans
- emergency response plans
- hazardous waste verification
- CDBG grant applications
- CDBG grant administration
- FRDAP grant applications
- tourism development
- general economic development
- small business loans

ADCO
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Mr. McDowell was a national leader among the certified development companies through their trade association, National Association of Development Companies. ADCO is extremely proud of this accomplishment, and wishes to thank its directors, borrowers and the bankers in the region for their assistance in achieving this award.

In addition, ADCO received the SBA's Annual Award for Most Improved CDC for the year 2000.

Loan activity continues in the region, with the recent funding of a child care center in East Gainesville, and a motel project in Marion County. Construction is underway on a child care center in Hawthorne, a convenience store in Lake City, and a funeral home in Old Town. Other projects in process include a convenience store in Gainesville, and an RV dealership in Ocala.

Inquiries regarding Small Business Administration financing may be directed to **Jim Emerson** at **(352) 955-2199, Ext. 107**.

WEB PAGES OF INTEREST

North Central Florida Regional Planning Council
<http://ncfrpc.org>

The Original Florida - <http://originalflorida.org>

North Central Florida Economic Development Partnership
<http://originalfloridabusiness.org>

North Central Florida Local Emergency Planning Committee -
<http://www.ncflepc.org>

North Central Florida Area-wide Development Co., Inc.
<http://adco.org>

I-75 Corridor Council -
<http://www.i75floridagateway.com>
or
<http://www.i75project.com>



Pumpkin Patch Child Care Center in Hawthorne is shown above, during its final construction phase. Financing was provided by an SBA 504 loan, together with a first mortgage loan from M&S Bank. The original location was acquired as part of the right-of-way condemnation for the widening of SR 20, through Hawthorne.

PUBLIC AVAILABILITY NOTICE OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INFORMATION

The Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act of 1986, also known as Title III of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) requires emergency planning, and emergency notification of accidental releases. The legislation also mandates that information concerning chemical inventories of certain facilities be made available to the public. Regional Planning Council provides staff to the North Central Florida Local Emergency Planning Committee which serves as a repository of Title III chemical data.

The public has access to a variety of chemical specific data and information about facilities reporting under provisions of the Act. Accordingly, pursuant to Section 324 of the Title III Act, the following information is available to the public upon request during business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

- * Section 302: Chemical Notification
- * Section 304: Emergency Follow-up Notice
- * Section 311: Materials Safety Data Sheets
- * Section 312: Hazardous Chemical Inventory (Tier two) Form
- * North Central Florida Regional Hazardous Materials Plan

Citizens and businesses seeking information on any of the above provisions should contact **Dwayne Mundy at 352/955-2200, ext. 108 or email: mundy@ncfrpc.org.**

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