

LEGISLATIVE BILL 736

Approved by the Governor May 29, 1987

Introduced by Scofield, 49; Landis, 46; Morehead, 30;
 Hefner, 19; Withem, 14; Wesely, 26;
 Chizek, 31; Conway, 17; Nelson, 35;
 Harris, 27

AN ACT relating to economic development; to amend section 81-1201.14, Revised Statutes Supplement, 1986; to adopt the Business Development Partnership Act; to harmonize provisions; and to repeal the original section.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

Section 1. Sections 1 to 6 of this act shall be known and may be cited as the Business Development Partnership Act.

Sec. 2. The Legislature finds and declares:

(1) That the availability of business development services at various geographic locations throughout the state would result in the retention, expansion, and diversification of existing businesses and the creation of new businesses;

(2) That the Nebraska Business Development Center, a department of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, shall provide business development services through a network of small business development centers at Chadron State College, Kearney State College, Peru State College, University of Nebraska at Lincoln, University of Nebraska at Omaha, and Wayne State College;

(3) That business development services may be augmented through specialized research and technical assistance services;

(4) That the Small Business Division of the Department of Economic Development shall coordinate, administrate, and support the delivery of such services; and

(5) That there should be appropriated \$121,000 for fiscal year 1987-88 to the Small Business Division to carry out the Business Development Partnership Act.

Sec. 3. There is hereby created the Business Development Services Program in the Small Business Division of the Department of Economic Development. The division shall be responsible for the administration of

the program and shall have the power and authority to contract for services as provided in sections 4 and 5 of this act.

Sec. 4. The Small Business Division shall contract with the Nebraska Business Development Center to administer, manage, and deliver regional small business services, and the Nebraska Business Development Center shall:

(1) Provide such services as close as possible to small businesses through a network of small business development centers located in Omaha, Lincoln, Kearney, Wayne, North Platte, Scottsbluff or Gering, Chadron, Peru, and such other communities as the Small Business Division shall determine based on the applications of communities desiring to be the location of a small business development center. In determining the location of small business development centers, the Small Business Division shall consider several factors, including, but not limited to: (a) Preexisting small business development centers; (b) geographic accessibility; and (c) existing resources such as building space and office equipment or the willingness of a community to provide some or all of those resources. The Small Business Division shall prescribe the form of the application for location of a small business development center and take all actions necessary in the processing of such applications;

(2) Integrate activities funded through the Business Development Partnership Act with those funded by the United States Small Business Administration or any other program supporting the Nebraska small business development centers;

(3) Furnish one-to-one individual counseling to small businesses;

(4) Assist in technology transfer, research, and coupling from existing sources to small businesses;

(5) Maintain current information concerning federal, state, and local regulations that affect small businesses and counsel small business on methods of compliance;

(6) Coordinate and conduct research into technical and general small business problems for which there are no ready solutions;

(7) Provide and maintain a comprehensive library that contains current information and statistical data needed by small businesses;

(8) Maintain a working relationship and open communications with the financial and investment communities, legal associations, local and regional

private consultants, and local and regional small business groups and associations in order to help address the various needs of the small business community;

(9) Conduct in-depth surveys for local small business groups in order to develop general information regarding the local economy and general small business strengths and weaknesses in the locality; and

(10) Provide other services as determined in consultation with the Small Business Division.

Sec. 5. The Small Business Division may contract with any postsecondary institution of higher education, community organization, governmental agency or entity, or any other profit or nonprofit entity to provide specialized research, technology development assistance, technology transfer services, financial packaging or leveraging services, human resources development services, or such other specialized services as the Small Business Division deems necessary if preference is given to entities based in or operating in Nebraska.

Sec. 6. The Small Business Division shall require, as a condition of contracts awarded under the Business Development Services Program, satisfactory quarterly reports from recipients describing services provided, clients served, and expenditures. The Small Business Division shall provide an annual report to the Legislature which describes services provided under the Business Development Partnership Act, analyzes the impact of the services, makes recommendations regarding the services, and evaluates the performance of service deliverers.

Sec. 7. That section 81-1201.14, Revised Statutes Supplement, 1986, be amended to read as follows:

81-1201.14. The Small Business Division shall (1) develop a community-based program to provide financial and technical assistance to small businesses and entrepreneurs and to assist in the formation of venture capital available to such enterprises, (2) implement the goals and objectives of the Small Business Development Authority Act, and (3) serve as the coordinating entity for public assistance programs for small businesses and entrepreneurs, and (4) administer the Business Development Partnership Act.

The Small Business Division shall avoid duplication with existing programs already in place which assist small businesses and entrepreneurs, and the department and the division shall deliver their programs

through, to the extent possible, the Nebraska Small Business Development Centers, the Nebraska Technical Assistance Center, the Nebraska Food Processing Center, the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority, the Small Business Administration of the federal government, and other related organizations.

Sec. 8. That original section 81-1201.14, Revised Statutes Supplement, 1986, is repealed.