

JAN 21 2004
TRANSPORTATION

HOUSE FILE 2056
BY RASMUSSEN

Passed House, Date _____ Passed Senate, Date _____
Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____ Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____
Approved _____

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to the statewide welcome center program.
2 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

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HF 2056

1 Section 1. Section 15.271, subsection 1, paragraph e, Code
2 2003, is amended to read as follows:

3 e. A program shall be established to plan, acquire,
4 develop, promote, operate, and maintain a variety of welcome
5 centers at strategic locations to meet the needs of travelers
6 in the state. ~~The program is intended to be accomplished by~~
7 ~~1992.~~

8 Sec. 2. Section 15.272, Code 2003, is amended to read as
9 follows:

10 15.272 STATEWIDE WELCOME CENTER PROGRAM -- OBJECTIVES AND
11 AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES ~~---PILOT-PROJECTS.~~

12 1. The state agencies, as indicated in this section, shall
13 undertake certain specific functions to implement the goals of
14 a statewide program, ~~including the pilot projects,~~ for welcome
15 centers.

16 ~~1.~~ 2. The department and the state department of
17 transportation shall jointly establish a statewide long-range
18 plan for developing and operating welcome centers throughout
19 the state. ~~The plan shall be submitted to the general~~
20 ~~assembly by January 15, 1988.~~ By January 1, 2005, the
21 existing long-range plan shall be reviewed and amended by the
22 departments. The departments shall review and amend the plan
23 as needed thereafter. The plan and any amended plan shall
24 address, but not be limited to, the following:

25 a. Integrating state, regional, and local tourism and
26 recreation marketing and promotion plans.

27 b. Recommending a wide range of centers, including state-
28 developed and state-operated to privately managed facilities.

29 c. Establishing design, service, and maintenance quality
30 standards which all welcome centers will maintain. Included
31 in the standards shall be a provision requiring that space or
32 facilities be available for purposes of displaying and
33 offering for sale Iowa-made products, crafts, and arts. The
34 space or facilities may be operated by the department or
35 leased to and operated by other persons.

1 d. Making projections of increased tourist spending,
2 indirect economic benefits, and direct revenue production
3 which are estimated to occur as a result of implementing a
4 statewide welcome center program.

5 e. Projecting estimated acquisition, construction,
6 exhibit, staffing, and maintenance costs.

7 f. Integrating electronic data telecommunications systems.

8 g. Identifying sites for maintaining existing centers as
9 well as locations for new centers. In the amended long-range
10 plan due by January 1, 2005, the departments shall increase
11 the number of welcome centers to be developed and operated in
12 the state and shall identify locations for the new welcome
13 centers.

14 3. The departments department and the state department of
15 transportation may enter into contracts for the preparation of
16 the long-range plan and subsequent amended plans. The
17 departments shall involve the department of natural resources
18 and the department of cultural affairs in the preparation of
19 the plan and subsequent amended plans. The recommendations
20 and comments of organizations representing hospitality and
21 tourism services, including but not limited to, the regional
22 tourism councils, convention and visitors bureaus, and the
23 Iowa travel council, and others with interests in this program
24 will be considered for incorporation in the plan and
25 subsequent amended plans. ~~Prior-to-submission-of-the-plan-to~~
26 ~~the-general-assembly,-the~~ The plan and subsequent amended
27 plans shall be submitted to the regional tourism councils, the
28 convention and visitors bureaus, and the Iowa travel council
29 for their comments and criticisms ~~which-shall-be-submitted-by~~
30 ~~the-department-along-with-the-plan-to-the-general-assembly.~~

31 2- 4. The responsibilities of the department of economic
32 development include the following:

33 a. Seeing to the acquisition of property and the
34 construction of all new welcome centers ~~including-the-pilot~~
35 ~~projects-selected-by-the-department-pursuant-to-paragraph-"e".~~

1 In carrying out this responsibility the department may, but is
2 not limited to, the following:

3 (1) Arrange for the state department of transportation to
4 acquire title to land and buildings for use as and undertake
5 construction of state-owned welcome centers. In acquiring
6 property and constructing the welcome centers, ~~including-any~~
7 ~~pilot-projects~~, the state department of transportation may use
8 any funds available to it, including but not limited to, the
9 RISE fund, matching funds from local units of government or
10 organizations, the primary road fund, federal grants, and
11 moneys specifically appropriated for these purposes.

12 (2) Contract with other state agencies, local units of
13 government, or private groups, organizations, or entities for
14 the use of land, buildings, or facilities as state welcome
15 centers or in connection with state welcome centers, whether
16 or not the property is actually owned by the state. If the
17 local match required for ~~pilot-projects-or-which-may-be~~
18 ~~required-for-other~~ welcome centers is met by providing land,
19 buildings, or facilities, the entity providing the local match
20 shall enter into an agreement with the department of economic
21 development to either transfer title of the property to the
22 state or to dedicate the use of the property under the
23 conditions and period of time set by the department.

24 b. Providing for the operations, management, and
25 maintenance of the state-owned and state-operated welcome
26 centers, including the collection and distribution of tourism
27 literature, telecommunication services, and other travel-
28 related services, and the display and offering for sale of
29 Iowa-made products, crafts, and arts.

30 c. Providing, at the discretion of the department,
31 financial assistance in the form of loans and grants to
32 privately operated information centers to the extent the
33 centers are consistent with the long-range plan and subsequent
34 amended plans.

35 d. Developing a common theme or graphic logo which will be

1 identified with all welcome centers which meet the standards
2 of operations established for those centers.

3 ~~e.---Selecting the sites for the pilot projects.---In~~
4 ~~selecting the pilot project sites, the following apply:~~

5 ~~(1)---Up to three sites may be located in proximity to the~~
6 ~~interstates and up to three sites may be located in proximity~~
7 ~~to the other primary roads.---The department shall select at~~
8 ~~least one site which is in proximity to a primary road which~~
9 ~~is not an interstate.~~

10 ~~(2)---Proposals for the sites must be submitted prior to~~
11 ~~September 1, 1987 and shall contain a commitment of at least a~~
12 ~~one dollar per dollar match of state financial assistance.~~
13 ~~The local match may be in terms of land, buildings, or other~~
14 ~~noncash items which are acceptable by the department.~~

15 ~~(3)---Priority shall be given to proposals that have the~~
16 ~~best local match, that are to be located where there is a very~~
17 ~~high number of travelers passing, and for which the~~
18 ~~department, after consultation with the departments of~~
19 ~~transportation, natural resources, and cultural affairs,~~
20 ~~considers the chances of success to be nearly perfect.~~

21 ~~(4)---The department shall select the sites by September 15,~~
22 ~~1987.~~

23 EXPLANATION

24 This bill relates to the statewide welcome center program,
25 which was originally enacted in 1987.

26 The bill removes language relating to the original pilot
27 project sites, the requirement that the original statewide
28 long-range plan for welcome centers be submitted to the
29 general assembly, and a 1992 deadline for implementation of
30 the program.

31 The bill requires the department of economic development
32 and the state department of transportation to review and amend
33 the existing long-range plan by January 1, 2005. The bill
34 requires the departments to review and amend the plan as
35 needed thereafter. The amended long-range plan, due by

1 January 1, 2005, is to include an increase in the number of
2 welcome centers to be developed and operated in the state and
3 to identify the locations for new welcome centers.

4 The bill makes conforming amendments relating to subsequent
5 amended long-range plans.

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