

Sec. XXXX. APPROPRIATION; SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

In fiscal year 2018 there is appropriated from the General Fund to the Vermont Small Business Development Center the amount of \$400,000.00 for the purpose of increasing the number of business advisors throughout the State.

Sec. XXXX. APPROPRIATION; ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MARKETING INITIATIVE

(a) The sum of \$750,000 is appropriated to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for developing and launching an economic development marketing program.

(1) The funds appropriated in the section shall be used to:

(A) implement the Department of Economic Development's economic development marketing plan to attract and retain residents and businesses to Vermont, highlighting the many positive features that make Vermont a great place to live, work, and do business, to include;

(1) promoting Vermont as a place where entrepreneurs, innovators and businesses can succeed, and where they can come to start and grow great businesses; and

(2) attracting and recruiting new businesses to locate in Vermont, with a focus on prospects best positioned to leverage and expand on brand attributes of innovation, technology, and energy leadership; and

(3) attracting and recruiting potential residents to grow the workforce to fill existing vacancies in growing businesses; and

(4) building on Vermont's successful branding and marketing efforts surrounding tourism, recreation, and the working lands; and

(5) promoting and supporting Vermont businesses, goods, and services.

(B) prioritize marketing tactics with the potential to most efficiently and effectively shift perceptions about Vermont as a place to live and work, and that will form a set of marketing assets and strategic framework to sustain Department of Economic Development's activities beyond initial implementation, including:

(1) an earned media program to secure and maintain a steady stream of positive coverage in national, regional, trade, industry and other news media; and

(2) an owned media program to extend the reach of positive news coverage in and out of state and strengthen the state's digital and social voice; and

(3) a strategic paid digital advertising program to expand the message and leverage the reach of the Department of Tourism & Marketing's advertising efforts to promote Vermont's travel, recreation, and cultural attractions; and

(4) an outreach and promotion program to support the growth of existing Vermont businesses, through activities such as trade shows, networking events and consumer event sponsorships; and

(5) an outreach program and ongoing strategy to reach Vermont children, college students, underemployed workers, and unemployed workers to promote the opportunities and workforce needs within Vermont's diverse economy.

(2) The funds appropriated in this section may be matched with federal funds, special funds, grants, donations, and private funds. To increase the amount and effectiveness of marketing activities conducted, the Agency will collaborate with private sector partners to maximize

State marketing resources and to enable Vermont businesses to align their own brand identities with the Vermont brand, enhancing the reputations of both the business and the State.

(3) The Secretary shall establish performance measures that support strategic priorities including the of strengthening the state economy before disbursing these funds.