

AN ACT concerning State government.

**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 Mississippi River Coordinating Council Act.

Section 5. Legislative Purpose. The Mississippi River is the primary water artery for the economic development of the United States. The restoration and conservation of the Mississippi River and its tributaries is in the economic and ecological interest of the citizens of this State. It is further in the public interest to establish, implement and monitor water management projects run by local, state, federal and not-for-profit entities.

Section 10. Mississippi River Coordinating Council.

(a) There is established the Mississippi River Coordinating Council (Council), consisting of 13 voting members to be appointed by the Governor. One member shall be the Lieutenant Governor who shall serve as a voting member and as chairperson of the Council. The agency members of the Council shall include the Directors, or their designees, of the following: the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Natural Resources, and the Department of Transportation. In addition, the Council shall include one member representing Soil and Water Conservation Districts located in the proximity of the Mississippi River and its tributaries, and 6 members representing local communities, not-for-profit organizations working to protect the Mississippi River and its tributaries, businesses, agriculture, recreation, conservation, and the environment.

(b) The Governor may appoint, as ex-officio members,

individuals representing the interests of the states who border the Mississippi River and individuals representing federal agencies.

(c) Members of the Council shall serve 2-year terms, except that of the initial appointments, 5 members shall be appointed to serve 3-year terms and 4 members to serve one-year terms.

(d) The Council shall meet at least quarterly.

(e) The Office of the Lieutenant Governor shall be responsible for the operations of the Council, including, without limitation, funding and oversight of the Council's activities. The Office may reimburse members of the Council for travel expenses.

(f) This Section is subject to the provisions of Section 405-500 of the Department of Central Management Services Law.

Section 15. Duties of the Council. The Council shall:

(1) periodically review activities and programs administered by State and federal agencies that directly impact the Mississippi River and its tributaries;

(2) work with local communities and organizations to encourage partnerships that enhance awareness and capabilities to address watershed and water resource concerns and to encourage strategies that protect, restore, and expand critical habitats and soil conservation and water quality practices;

(3) work with State and federal agencies to optimize the expenditure of funds affecting the Mississippi River and its tributaries;

(4) advise and make recommendations to the Governor and State agencies on ways to better coordinate the expenditure of appropriated funds affecting the Mississippi River and its tributaries;

(5) encourage local communities to develop water management plans to address stormwater, erosion, flooding, sedimentation, and pollution problems and encourage projects for the natural conveyance and storage of

floodwaters, the enhancement of wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation opportunities, the recovery, management, and conservation of the Mississippi River and its tributaries, the preservation of farmland, prairies, and forests, and the use of measurable economic development efforts that are compatible with the ecological health of the State; and

(6) help identify possible sources of additional funding for Mississippi River water management projects.

Section 20. Agency duties. State agencies represented on the Council shall provide to the Council, on request, information concerning agency programs, data, and activities that impact the restoration and preservation of the Mississippi River and its tributaries.