

1 AN ACT concerning State government.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Department of Commerce and Economic
5 Opportunity Law of the Civil Administrative Code of Illinois
6 is amended by adding Section 605-1057 as follows:

7 (20 ILCS 605/605-1057 new)

8 Sec. 605-1057. State-designated cultural districts.

9 (a) As used in this Section, "State-designated cultural
10 district" means a geographical area certified under this
11 Section that has a distinct, historic, and cultural identity.
12 Municipalities or 501(c)(3) organizations working on behalf of
13 a certified geographical area should seek to:

14 (1) Promote a distinct historic and cultural
15 community.

16 (2) Encourage economic development and supports
17 entrepreneurship in the geographic area and community.

18 (3) Encourage the preservation and development of
19 historic and culturally significant structures,
20 traditions, and languages.

21 (4) Foster local cultural development and education.

22 (5) Provide a focal point for celebrating and
23 strengthening the unique cultural identity of the

1 community.

2 (6) Promote growth and opportunity without generating
3 displacement or expanding inequality.

4 (b) Administrative authority. The Department of Commerce
5 and Economic Opportunity shall establish criteria and
6 guidelines for State-designated cultural districts by rule in
7 accordance with qualifying criteria outlined in subsection
8 (c). In executing its powers and duties under this Section,
9 the Department shall:

10 (1) establish a competitive application system by
11 which a community may apply for certification as a
12 State-designated cultural district;

13 (2) provide technical assistance for State-designated
14 cultural districts by collaborating with all relevant
15 offices and grantees of the Department to help them
16 identify and achieve their goals for cultural
17 preservation, including, but not limited to, promotional
18 support of State-designated cultural districts and support
19 for small businesses looking to access resources;

20 (3) collaborate with other State agencies, units of
21 local government, community organizations, and private
22 entities to maximize the benefits of State-designated
23 cultural districts; and

24 (4) establish an advisory committee to advise the
25 Department on program rules and the certification process.
26 The advisory committee shall reflect the diversity of the

1 State of Illinois, including geographic, racial, and
2 ethnic diversity. The advisory committee must include:

3 (A) a representative of the Department of Commerce
4 and Economic Opportunity appointed by the Director;

5 (B) a representative of the Department of
6 Agriculture appointed by the Director of Agriculture;

7 (C) a representative of the Illinois Housing
8 Development Authority appointed by the Executive
9 Director of the Illinois Housing Development
10 Authority;

11 (D) two members of the House of Representatives
12 appointed one each by the Speaker of the House of
13 Representatives and the Minority Leader of the House
14 of Representatives;

15 (E) two members of the Senate appointed one each
16 by the President of the Senate and the Minority Leader
17 of the Senate; and

18 (F) four community representatives appointed by
19 the Governor representing diverse racial, ethnic, and
20 geographic groups not captured in the membership of
21 the other designees, with the input of community and
22 stakeholder groups.

23 (c) Certification. A geographical area within the State
24 may be certified as a State-designated cultural district by
25 applying to the Department for certification. Certification as
26 a State-designated cultural district shall be for a period of

1 10 years, after which the district may renew certification
2 every 5 years. A municipality or 501(c)(3) organization may
3 apply for certification on behalf of a geographic area. The
4 applying entity is responsible for complying with reporting
5 requirements under subsection (f). The Department shall
6 develop criteria to assess whether an applicant qualifies for
7 certification under this Section. That criteria must include a
8 demonstration that the applicant and the community:

9 (1) have been historically impacted and are currently
10 at risk of losing their cultural identity because of
11 gentrification, displacement, or the COVID-19 pandemic;

12 (2) can demonstrate a history of economic
13 disinvestment; and

14 (3) can demonstrate strong community support for the
15 cultural district designation through active and formal
16 participation by community organizations and municipal and
17 regional government agencies or officials.

18 (d) Each applicant shall be encouraged by the Department
19 to:

20 (1) have development plans that include and prioritize
21 the preservation of local businesses and retention of
22 existing residents and businesses; and

23 (2) have an education framework in place informed with
24 a vision of food justice, social justice, community
25 sustainability, and social equity.

26 (e) The Department shall award no more than 5

1 State-designated cultural districts every year. At no point
2 shall the total amount of State-designated cultural districts
3 be more than 15, unless otherwise directed by the Director of
4 the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity in
5 consultation with the advisory committee.

6 (f) Within 12 months after being designated a cultural
7 district, the State-designated cultural district shall submit
8 a report to the Department detailing its current programs and
9 goals for the next 4 years of its designation. For each year
10 thereafter that the district remains a State-designated
11 cultural district, it shall submit a report to the Department
12 on the status of the program and future developments of the
13 district. Any State-designated cultural district that fails to
14 file a report for 2 consecutive years shall lose its status.

15 (g) This Section is repealed on July 1, 2031.