

Regular Session, 2011

SENATE BILL NO. 265

BY SENATOR RISER

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. Provides relative to premium tax credits under the Louisiana Entrepreneurial Assistance and Development (LEAD) program. (8/15/11)

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 22:832.1 and Chapter 55 of Title 51 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of  
3 1950, to be comprised of R.S. 51:3121 through 3132, relative to the Louisiana  
4 Entrepreneurial Assistance and Development program (LEAD); to create the  
5 program; to provide for a tax reduction for investors who make investments of  
6 eligible capital under the program; to provide for approval of LEAD funds by the  
7 department of economic development and to establish criteria for such approval; to  
8 provide criteria for issuers in which investments will be made; and to provide for  
9 related matters.

10 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

11 Section 1. R.S. 22:832.1 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

12 **§832.1. Investment tax credit**

13 **A. An investor who makes an investment of eligible capital pursuant to**  
14 **R.S. 51:3121, et seq., shall, in the year that the investment is made, earn a vested**  
15 **premium tax credit equal to seventy-five percent of the amount of the**  
16 **investment. The premium tax credit shall be available for but not limited to,**

1 taxes charged on insurance premiums under R.S. 22:831, 836, 838, and 842.  
2 Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the premium tax  
3 credit shall not be available for taxes charged on insurance premiums under  
4 R.S. 22:345, 439, 833, 835, 837, and 1476.

5 B. In any one taxable year, no more than twenty-five percent of the total  
6 premium tax credit earned with respect to a particular investment described in  
7 Subsection A of this Section may be used, provided that:

8 (1) An insurer may not utilize credits in any taxable year in excess of its  
9 premium tax liability for such taxable year.

10 (2) The premium tax credits shall not initially be applicable against  
11 premium tax liability generated in any calendar year until the third calendar  
12 year after the year in which the investment of eligible capital was made  
13 pursuant to R.S. 51:3121, et seq.

14 (3) The premium tax credit shall not be applicable against any estimated  
15 premium tax payments due prior to April 15, 2015.

16 C. Subject to the limitations in R.S. 22:832.1(B)(1), premium tax credits  
17 available under this Section may be carried forward for use in future years.

18 D.(1) Any investor who holds a premium tax credit described in this  
19 Section shall be allowed to transfer such credits to any insurance company  
20 subject to the forfeiture provisions of R.S. 51:3121, et seq. Within thirty days  
21 after the transfer of tax credits, the original holder of the tax credits shall notify  
22 the department in writing of all of the following information:

23 (a) The name of the new holder of the tax credits.

24 (b) The amount of tax credits transferred.

25 (c) The price of such tax credits.

26 (d) The date the transfer occurred.

27 (e) The tax identification number of the transferee.

28 (f) The remaining balance of credits held by the transferor.

29 (2) In the event such notice is not received by the Department of

1           **Insurance within the thirty-day period, the transfer of sale shall be void.**

2           Section 2. Chapter 55 of Title 51, comprised of R.S. 51:3121 through 3132 is hereby  
3 enacted to read as follows:

4                           **CHAPTER 55. LOUISIANA ENTREPRENEURIAL**

5   **ASSISTANCE AND DEVELOPMENT**

6           **§3121. Short title**

7                           **This Chapter may be cited as the "Louisiana Entrepreneurial Assistance**  
8 **and Development" program.**

9           **§3122. Findings**

10                           **A. The legislature recognizes the need to bring venture and expansion**  
11 **capital to the entrepreneurs of Louisiana to combat the current economic**  
12 **downturn and resulting difficulties in securing capital from traditional sources.**

13                           **B. The legislature further finds that to ensure the Louisiana-based**  
14 **development of the small and medium sized businesses that have traditionally**  
15 **created the vast majority of new jobs nationwide, it is in the public interest of**  
16 **the state to enact the Louisiana Entrepreneurial Assistance and Development**  
17 **program (LEAD) to provide an incentive to attract venture and expansion**  
18 **capital to eligible businesses.**

19           **§3123. Definitions**

20                           **As used in this Chapter, the following terms shall have the following**  
21 **meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:**

22                           **(1) "Allocation date" means the date a LEAD fund receives an**  
23 **investment of eligible capital equaling the amount of eligible capital allocated**  
24 **to its investors pursuant to this Chapter.**

25                           **(2) "Department" means the Louisiana Department of Economic**  
26 **Development.**

27                           **(3) "Eligible business" means a business to which all of the following**  
28 **apply:**

29                           **(a) At the time of a LEAD fund's initial investment therein, meets all of**

1 **the following criteria:**

2 **(i) A business which employs one hundred or fewer full-time employees.**

3 **(ii) A business which has at least eighty percent of its employees**  
4 **domiciled in Louisiana or at least eighty percent of its payroll paid to employees**  
5 **domiciled in Louisiana.**

6 **(iii) A business that is not engaged in any of the following: retail sales,**  
7 **real estate development, gaming, natural resource extraction or exploration,**  
8 **insurance, banking or lending or the provision of professional services provided**  
9 **by accountants, lawyers, or physicians.**

10 **(b) A business which has either a net worth of less than five million**  
11 **dollars at the time of such investment or had a net income of fifteen million**  
12 **dollars or less in the fiscal year immediately preceding such investment.**

13 **(4) "Eligible capital" means an investment of cash by an investor in a**  
14 **LEAD fund that fully funds the purchase price of an equity interest in the**  
15 **LEAD fund or a debt instrument issued by a LEAD fund, at par value or a**  
16 **premium, that meets all of the following criteria:**

17 **(a) Has an original maturity date at least five years after the date of**  
18 **issuance.**

19 **(b) Has a repayment schedule that is not faster than a level principal**  
20 **amortization over five years.**

21 **(c) Has no interest, distribution or payment features tied to the**  
22 **profitability or to the success of the investments of the LEAD fund until all of**  
23 **the requirements of R.S. 51:3130(A) have been satisfied.**

24 **(5) "LEAD fund" means a Louisiana partnership, corporation, trust or**  
25 **limited liability company, whether organized on a profit or non-profit basis that**  
26 **meets all of the following criteria:**

27 **(a) Fund is managed by at least two principals or persons domiciled in**  
28 **Louisiana that have at least five years of experience each in managing venture**  
29 **capital or private equity funds, with at least fifteen million dollars of such funds**

1 having been invested by persons that are unaffiliated with such principals or  
2 persons.

3 (b) Fund has received an equity investment of capital other than eligible  
4 capital equal to at least two hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

5 (c) Fund is not, or will not be after the receipt of eligible capital,  
6 controlled by or under common control with one or more insurance companies.

7 The definition criteria contained in this Subparagraph does not preclude an  
8 insurance company from exercising its legal rights and remedies, including  
9 interim management of a LEAD fund with respect to a LEAD fund that is in  
10 default of its statutory or contractual obligations to the insurance company or  
11 establishing controls to ensure that the LEAD fund satisfies the requirements  
12 of this Chapter. An investment of eligible capital shall not be deemed to result  
13 in insurance company control unless such investment exceeds forty million  
14 dollars with respect to any one investor.

15 (6) "Match" means a cash investment in an eligible business either  
16 contemporaneous with or subsequent to an investment of eligible capital by a  
17 LEAD fund in such eligible business, other than an investment made with  
18 eligible capital either from the LEAD fund or from another LEAD fund.

19 (7) "Secretary" means the secretary of the Louisiana Department of  
20 Economic Development.

21 **§3124. Premium tax credits**

22 An investor who makes an investment of eligible capital in a LEAD fund  
23 that is approved by the department pursuant to R.S. 51:3125 shall earn a vested  
24 premium tax credit pursuant to R.S. 22:832.1. The premium tax credit is  
25 earned and vested in the year of investment of eligible capital but is subject to  
26 the rules on utilization set forth in R.S. 22:832.1 and the forfeiture provisions  
27 of R.S. 51:3131.

28 **§3125. Application for certification**

29 A. On or before November 1, 2011, the secretary shall begin to accept

1        **applications for certification as a LEAD fund and for allocations of eligible**  
2        **capital and tax credits under this Section. Each application shall contain all of**  
3        **the following information:**

4                **(1) The amount of eligible capital the applicant proposes to raise.**

5                **(2) A nonrefundable application fee of seven thousand five hundred**  
6        **dollars.**

7                **(3) Evidence that the applicant satisfies the requirements for a LEAD**  
8        **fund pursuant to R.S. 51:3123(5)(b).**

9                **(4) An affidavit by each investor committing to an investment of eligible**  
10       **capital.**

11               **(5) A business plan detailing all of the following:**

12               **(a) The approximate percentage of eligible capital the applicant will**  
13       **invest in eligible businesses by the second, fourth, sixth, and eighth**  
14       **anniversaries of its allocation date.**

15               **(b) The stage of development and industry segments listed by the North**  
16       **American Industrial Classification code in which the applicant will invest.**

17               **(c) The types of investments the applicant will make, including but not**  
18       **limited to debt, equity, convertible debt or debt with equity-like features.**

19               **(6) A revenue impact assessment prepared by an independent third**  
20       **party contracted by the department and paid for by the applicant**  
21       **demonstrating that the applicant's investments, if made in accordance with its**  
22       **business plan, will have a positive or neutral revenue impact on the state taking**  
23       **into account the amount and timing of tax credits earned by investors of eligible**  
24       **capital in the LEAD fund and the match of one hundred per cent of the eligible**  
25       **capital invested by the applicant, which assessment shall include the applicant's**  
26       **estimate of the number of jobs that will be created or retained as a result of the**  
27       **applicant's investments and matching investments.**

28               **(7) Any offering material involving the sale of securities of the LEAD**  
29       **fund, which offering material must include the following statements: "The state**

1 of Louisiana is not liable for damages to an investor in an issuer participating  
2 in the Louisiana Entrepreneurial Assistance and Development (LEAD)  
3 program. Use of the word 'Louisiana' or other terms used in conjunction with  
4 the LEAD program in an offering does not constitute a recommendation or  
5 endorsement of the investment by the Louisiana Department of Economic  
6 Development.'

7 B.(1) Not later than the thirtieth day after the date an application for  
8 certification is filed, the secretary shall do either one of the following:

9 (a) Issue the certification and notify the applicant of the amount of  
10 eligible capital and associated tax credits allocated to its investors.

11 (b) Refuse to issue the certification and communicate in detail to the  
12 applicant the grounds for the refusal.

13 (2) If an applicant submits an amended application within fifteen days  
14 of receipt of refusal from the department, the department shall have fifteen  
15 days from the receipt of such amended application by which to communicate its  
16 approval or refusal of such amended application to the applicant.

17 C.(1) Applications for tax credits pursuant to this Subsubsection shall  
18 be accepted and approved on a first-come, first-serve basis with all applications  
19 received on the same date deemed to be received simultaneously.

20 (2) The secretary may not allocate more than two hundred million in  
21 eligible capital under this Chapter.

22 (3) If applicants for tax credits received by the department on any date  
23 exceed the total amount of approval authority remaining under this Chapter on  
24 such date, the eligible capital and associated tax credits shall be allocated on a  
25 per applicant basis with each applicant being allocated eligible capital and  
26 associated tax credits equal to the total amount of requests received for that day  
27 divided by the total amount of applicants filing applications on such date that  
28 were approved. If the allocation results in one or more applicants receiving an  
29 allocation in excess of the amount that was requested, such excess shall be

1 reallocated to the remaining applicants from that date on an equal basis until  
2 the entirety of the allocation has been fully distributed. All applicants that  
3 share common management or are under common control, whether the  
4 management or control is accomplished directly or indirectly, shall be treated  
5 as a single applicant.

6 **§3126. Report upon receipt of eligible capital**

7 Each LEAD fund shall report the following items to the secretary:

8 (1) The name of each investor from whom eligible capital was received,  
9 including the investor's tax identification number.

10 (2) The amount of eligible capital received from each investor.

11 (3) The date on which the eligible capital was received. If a LEAD fund  
12 does not receive an investment of eligible capital equaling the amount of eligible  
13 capital allocated to it pursuant to R. S. 51:3125(B) prior to the fifth business day  
14 after receipt of certification, the LEAD fund shall notify the secretary by  
15 overnight common carrier delivery service and that portion of eligible capital  
16 allocated to the investor shall be forfeited. Any forfeited eligible capital shall  
17 be reallocated pursuant to R.S. 51:3125, provided that if such forfeited eligible  
18 capital was subject to an allocation in accordance with R.S. 51:3125(C), it shall  
19 be reallocated first to investors in the other LEAD funds affected by such  
20 allocation.

21 **§3127. Department approval of investments in eligible businesses; eligible**  
22 **businesses**

23 A.(1) Prior to making any initial investment in a potential eligible  
24 business, a LEAD fund shall request a written opinion from the department as  
25 to whether the business in which it proposes to invest is an eligible business,  
26 including whether such investment is consistent with the LEAD fund's business  
27 plan and satisfies the requirement of R.S. 51:3130(A)(2).

28 (2) The department shall have fifteen days either to grant the written  
29 opinion or to deny the request, in which case it shall give the reasons for its



1           **denial.**

2                   **(3) If the department fails to respond within the fifteen-day period set**  
3           **forth above, the proposed investment shall be deemed to be made in an eligible**  
4           **business that is consistent with the LEAD fund's business plan and that satisfies**  
5           **the requirement of R.S. 51:3130(A)(2) if a written opinion was requested as to**  
6           **satisfaction of that requirement.**

7                   **B. A LEAD fund may not invest more than fifteen percent of its eligible**  
8           **capital in any one eligible business without prior approval of the secretary.**

9           **§3128. Maintenance of certification**

10                   **To maintain certification, a LEAD fund shall accomplish all of the**  
11           **following items:**

12                   **(1) Comply with the investment parameters set forth in its business plan,**  
13           **provided a LEAD fund may apply to the secretary to amend its business plan**  
14           **based on unavoidable or reasonably unanticipated changes to various**  
15           **conditions, including, but not limited to, the general economic climate of the**  
16           **state of particular sectors of the economy, technological advances and high**  
17           **employment and revenue growth opportunities, with approval for such changes**  
18           **not to be unreasonably withheld by the secretary.**

19                   **(2) Invest twenty-five percent of its eligible capital in eligible businesses**  
20           **by the second anniversary of its allocation date.**

21                   **(3) Invest fifty percent of its eligible capital in eligible businesses by the**  
22           **fourth anniversary of its allocation date.**

23                   **(4) Invest one hundred percent of its eligible capital in eligible businesses**  
24           **by the tenth anniversary of its allocation date and satisfy the requirement of**  
25           **R.S. 51:3130(A)(2). A LEAD fund shall only invest eligible capital in eligible**  
26           **businesses, bank deposits, certificates of deposit or other debt securities issued**  
27           **or guaranteed by investment-grade issuers or money market, mutual or**  
28           **exchange traded funds whose investments are limited to the foregoing.**

29           **§3129. Annual reporting**

1           Not later than January thirty-first annually, each LEAD fund shall  
2 report to the secretary all of the following items:

3           (1) The amount of eligible capital remaining at the end of the preceding  
4 year to be invested in eligible businesses and, with respect to each eligible  
5 business, its location and two-digit North American Industrial Classification  
6 System code.

7           (2) The percentage of eligible capital invested in businesses that meet the  
8 requirement of R.S. 51:3130(A)(2).

9           (3) All distributions made by the LEAD fund in the preceding year.

10          (4) The number of jobs created or retained as a result of the LEAD  
11 fund's investments in eligible businesses during the preceding year. Each  
12 LEAD fund shall provide to the secretary an annual audited financial statement  
13 not later than June thirtieth of each year.

14          §3130. Distributions

15           A. To make a distribution or payment, other than those listed in  
16 Subsection B of this Section, a LEAD fund shall have accomplished all of the  
17 following items:

18           (1) Invested one hundred percent of its eligible capital in eligible  
19 businesses.

20           (2) Invested at least fifty percent of its eligible capital in eligible  
21 businesses that are either one of the following:

22           (a) Engaged in the development of initial product or service offerings,  
23 such as prototype development or establishment of initial production or service  
24 processes.

25           (b) Within one of the following industry segments: digital media or  
26 software development, next-generation automobiles, specialty health care,  
27 renewable energy or energy efficiency, water management or next-wave oil and  
28 gas, or other industry segments approved by the secretary.

29           (3) The LEAD fund shall have achieved a match amount, that when

1 added to any investments in eligible businesses made by the LEAD fund in  
2 excess of one hundred percent of its eligible capital, equals at least one hundred  
3 percent of the LEAD fund's eligible capital.

4 B. At any time, a LEAD fund is authorized to make any one of the  
5 following items:

6 (1) Distributions related to the payment of any projected increase in  
7 federal or state taxes, including penalties and interest related to state and  
8 federal income taxes, of the equity owners of the LEAD fund resulting from the  
9 earnings or other tax liability of the LEAD fund to the extent that the increase  
10 is related to the ownership, management, or operation of the LEAD fund.

11 (2) Payments of interest and principal on the debt of the LEAD fund,  
12 subject to the limitation of R.S. 51:3123(4)(c).

13 (3) Payments related to the reasonable costs and expenses of forming,  
14 syndicating, managing, and operating the fund, provided the distribution or  
15 payment is not made directly or indirectly to an investor that has invested  
16 eligible capital in the LEAD fund, including all of the following items:

17 (a) Reasonable and necessary fees paid for professional services,  
18 including legal and accounting services, related to the formation and operation  
19 of the LEAD fund.

20 (b) An annual management fee in an amount that does not exceed two  
21 and one-half percent of the eligible capital of the LEAD fund, provided that a  
22 LEAD fund may not pay management fees after the tenth anniversary of its  
23 allocation date if it has not met the requirements set forth in R.S. 51:3128(4).

24 C. The state shall receive ten percent of any distribution, other than  
25 distributions described in Paragraph B of this Subsection and distributions  
26 made to return any equity capital invested in the LEAD fund that is not eligible  
27 capital. The state's distribution percentage shall increase to either of the  
28 following:

29 (1) Twenty percent if less than eighty percent and more than sixty

1 percent of the jobs set forth in the LEAD fund's business plan are created and  
2 retained.

3 (2) Forty percent when sixty percent or less of the jobs set forth in the  
4 LEAD fund's business plan are created or retained.

5 §3131. Decertification and forfeiture

6 A.(1) The secretary shall review each annual report to ensure  
7 compliance with R.S. 51:3128, 3129, and 3130.

8 (2) A material violation of R.S. 51:3128, 3129, or 3130 shall be grounds  
9 for decertification of a LEAD fund.

10 (3) If the secretary determines that a LEAD fund is not in compliance  
11 with R.S. 51:3128, 3129, or 3130, the secretary shall notify the officers of the  
12 LEAD fund, in writing, that the LEAD fund may be subject to decertification  
13 after the one hundred twentieth day after the date of mailing of the notice,  
14 unless the deficiencies are waived by the secretary or are corrected and the  
15 LEAD fund returns to compliance.

16 B. Decertification of a LEAD fund prior to its investment of at least fifty  
17 percent of its eligible capital in eligible businesses shall cause the forfeiture of  
18 all tax credits earned under this Chapter. Upon satisfaction of the requirement  
19 of R.S. 51:3128(3), tax credits earned under this Chapter are no longer subject  
20 to recapture or forfeiture.

21 C.(1) Upon satisfying the requirements of R.S. 51:3128(3) and (4), a  
22 LEAD fund shall provide notice to the department. The department shall,  
23 within sixty days of receipt of such notice, either confirm that the LEAD fund  
24 has satisfied such requirement as of such date or provide notice of  
25 noncompliance and an explanation of any existing deficiencies.

26 (2) If the department does not provide such notification within sixty  
27 days, the LEAD fund shall be deemed to have met all requirements of R.S.  
28 51:3128(3) and (4).

29 (3) Except for distributions made pursuant to R.S. 51:3130(C), a LEAD

1 fund that has satisfied the requirement set forth in R.S. 51:3128(4) shall no  
2 longer be subject to regulation under this Chapter.

3 §3132. Administration of the program

4 A. The department shall be responsible for all of the following:

5 (1) Maintaining and interpreting policy pursuant to the provisions of  
6 this Chapter.

7 (2) Perform the regulatory and examination functions pursuant to the  
8 provisions of this Chapter.

9 (3) Provide for the implementation and administration of the Louisiana  
10 Entrepreneurial Assistance and Development program.

11 B. (1) The department shall have the authority to adopt, in accordance  
12 with the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act, R.S. 49:950, et seq.,  
13 rules and regulations concerning the implementation and regulation of the  
14 Louisiana Entrepreneurial Assistance and Development program.

15 (2) The department shall issue advisory rulings, as requested, provided  
16 that each advisory ruling is limited to the specific facts outlined in the request  
17 and may be only relied upon by the specific requestor of the ruling.

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The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Mary Dozier O'Brien.

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DIGEST

Proposed law creates the Louisiana Entrepreneurial Assistance and Development (LEAD) Program which grants a tax reduction to insurance companies under certain circumstances.

Proposed law provides definitions.

Proposed law provides with respect to premium tax credits, applications for certification as a LEAD fund, and applications for tax credits.

Proposed law provides for information to be communicated to the secretary of the Louisiana Department of Economic Development once an entity has received eligible capital.

Proposed law provides that a LEAD fund shall not invest more than 15% of its eligible capital in any one eligible business, without the permission of the secretary of Louisiana Department of Economic Development.

Proposed law provides relative to a fund maintaining its compliance with the conditions set forth for LEAD funds.

Proposed law provides that the Louisiana Department of Economic Development shall be responsible for the administration of the program.

Effective August 15, 2011.

(Adds R.S. 22:832.1 and R.S. 51:3121-3132)