

Governor's Economic Opportunity Office

Governor's economic opportunity office; consolidation

Sponsor: Representative Karen Fann

Background

Arizona should be the best state in the country for people to find work, yet government continues to get in the way of business owners and the working men and women they employ. Historically, Arizona has made several efforts to expand economic opportunity, including initiatives in the area of workforce development. However, these efforts have been scattered across state government, creating inefficiencies and programs where outcomes are not effectively tracked. Government must remove the barriers of job growth so that all businesses, big and small, can grow and thrive in Arizona.

Purpose

The Governor's Economic Opportunity Office (GEOO) will consolidate and improve analytic capacity with the goal of identifying the state's economic advantages and deficiencies. Through rigorous evaluation and benchmarking, GEOO will continuously provide state leaders the data to drive down regulatory burdens, increase tax competitiveness and streamline the state's workforce programs. GEOO will also consolidate the state's many tax-exempt finance authorities under one board, providing relocating and expanding businesses a one-stop financing shop at the state level.

To boost communication of competitive advantages GEOO identifies, the Arizona Commerce Authority (ACA), Arizona Office of Tourism and the Arizona-Mexico Commission will co-locate, increasing collaboration and alignment when promoting the state to each of their core audiences. Establishing GEOO as the analytical hub for economic development strategy will enable the ACA to focus exclusively on business attraction and growth, and inform and support the three Sales Force entities as they pursue a unified marketing strategy.

Provisions of the bill

GEOO's work will encompass three main drivers of economic development:

- *Tax and Regulation*
 - Benchmark, monitor and analyze the tax and regulatory burden in Arizona against competitor states and cities
 - Evaluate the effectiveness of Arizona's tax incentives
 - Produce economic impact evaluations of proposed regulation reforms
- *Workforce*
 - Consolidate existing staff focused on workforce analytics and strategy at ACA, ADOA and DES
 - Monitor program outcomes on workforce spending through a data system that connects workforce and education data sources
 - Develop a statewide workforce plan that aligns with Arizona's economic development priorities
- *Finance*
 - Establish a statewide Industrial Development Authority (IDA) that facilitates businesses' access to tax-exempt financing in an effort to attract relocating and expanding businesses to Arizona
 - Create less government by establishing a one-stop financing shop for the state; absorbing WIFA, GADA, AzHFA, AHFA and AIDA