

1 AN ACT to create the Rural Illinois Technology Program
2 Act.

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

5 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the
6 Rural Illinois Technology Program Act.

7 Section 5. Policy. It is necessary and desirable to
8 provide technical assistance, planning support, and funding
9 in the form of grants to encourage technology planning and
10 development in rural communities. It is also necessary to
11 provide funding in the form of grants to rural communities
12 for business development, social services development, and
13 medical support systems technology to promote rural
14 economies.

15 Section 10. Definitions. In this Act:

16 "Committee" means a local committee established under
17 this Act.

18 "Institute" means the Illinois Institute for Rural
19 Affairs at Western Illinois University.

20 "Program" means the Rural Illinois Technology and
21 Innovations Program.

22 "Technology Plan" means an integrated document that
23 includes goals, policies, strategies, and procedures for
24 developing business, social services, and telemedicine
25 networks and medical support systems and is adopted as
26 provided in Section 30 of this Act.

27 Section 15. The Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs.
28 The Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs at Western Illinois
29 University, in conjunction with the Governor's Rural Affairs

1 Council and the Governor's Office of Technology, shall
2 administer the Program under this Act. The Governor's Rural
3 Affairs Council and the Governor's Office of Technology must
4 each furnish technical support to the Institute.

5 The Institute must submit a report to the Rural Affairs
6 Council by January 1, 2003 and every 2 years thereafter
7 regarding progress made towards accomplishing the purposes of
8 this Act.

9 Section 20. Rural Illinois Technology and Innovations
10 Program. The Rural Illinois Technology and Innovations
11 Program is created. The Institute shall determine the
12 eligibility of rural community partnerships for funding under
13 the Program with the assistance of a Representative of the
14 Governor's Rural Affairs Council. The purpose of the Program
15 is to provide grants and technical assistance to rural
16 communities to (i) inventory their technology, social
17 services, telemedicine and distance learning networks, and
18 technological resources; (ii) develop Technology Plans; and
19 (iii) create new strategies for and promote the development
20 of advanced technology in business, social services, and
21 medical support systems in rural communities.

22 In addition to awarding grants under this Act, the
23 Program shall:

24 (1) Work with the Mapping the Future of your
25 Community Program at Western Illinois University, and
26 with the Cooperative Extension Service at the University
27 of Illinois, to provide rural communities with technical
28 assistance and planning support needed to develop
29 Technology Plans under this Act.

30 (2) Assist rural business and economic leaders who
31 have innovative strategies for the use of technology to
32 promote the development of new high-tech businesses in
33 their communities.

1 (3) Work with private sector organizations on the
2 development of new strategies for the delivery of
3 services in rural communities.

4 (4) Work with the Center for Rural Health within
5 the Illinois Department of Public Health and with rural
6 hospitals and clinics to create new strategies in the
7 development of telemedicine and distance learning
8 networks for rural communities.

9 (5) Obtain additional State and federal funding and
10 resources to equip rural hospitals and clinics with new
11 technology, including the development of telemedicine and
12 distance learning networks.

13 (6) Expand the Program as necessary to promote the
14 objectives of this Act.

15 The Institute, in conjunction with the Governor's Rural
16 Affairs Council and the Governor's Office of Technology,
17 shall coordinate and administer these and any additional
18 aspects of the Program.

19 Section 25. Local committees. A local committee,
20 consisting of local community leaders, shall work with a
21 professional planner or other technology resource specialist
22 to develop criteria for prioritizing technology needs and
23 resources. When prioritizing technology needs and resources,
24 the committee shall analyze the specific needs for technology
25 in business and business development, social services,
26 telemedicine and distance learning networks, and medical
27 support systems. The committee shall recommend that the
28 county, municipality, regional board, or other unit of local
29 government adopt a Technology Plan.

30 Section 30. Funding. Subject to appropriation, the
31 Institute shall award grants and attempt to apportion funds
32 evenly between the goals of business development, promotion

1 of social services, and development of telemedicine networks
2 and medical support systems.

3 Section 35. Rules. The Institute, in conjunction with a
4 representative of the Governor's Rural Affairs Council, may
5 adopt any rules necessary to implement this Act.

6 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
7 becoming law.