

HB402 INTRODUCED



1 HB402
2 UAM1GDX-1
3 By Representatives Travis, Crawford, Bolton, Starnes, Fincher,
4 McCampbell, Chestnut, Jackson
5 RFD: Ways and Means Education
6 First Read: 06-Mar-25



SYNOPSIS:

This bill would establish a formal process requiring the Legislative Services Agency to complete a Rural Impact Report if so requested by a legislator on any bill pending before the Legislature.

This bill would specify the issues that must be assessed in a Rural Impact Report, including the impact on school systems, consequences to farmers and agricultural businesses, broken down by legislative districts and affected rural communities, and would require the incorporation of data from experts and rural stakeholders.

This bill would establish a time frame for completing a report.

A BILL
TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

Relating to the Legislature; to require the Legislative Services Agency to complete a Rural Impact Report on a bill, if so requested, and would set parameters for the contents of a report.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:



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29 Section 1. This act shall be known as the Reviewing
30 Urban-Rural Asymmetries in Legislation (RURAL) Act.

31 Section 2. The purpose of this act is to ensure that
32 proposed legislation is evaluated for its potential effects on
33 rural communities, agricultural stakeholders, and rural school
34 districts before enactment, promoting informed decision-making
35 and transparency in the legislative process. Additionally,
36 this act provides comparative analysis between rural,
37 suburban, and urban districts to highlight disparities and
38 ensure balanced policy making.

39 Section 3. (a) Any member of the Legislature may submit
40 a formal request for a Rural Impact Report on any bill
41 introduced in a legislative session.

42 (b) Requests shall be submitted to the Legislative
43 Services Agency, which shall be responsible for conducting the
44 assessment.

45 Section 4. (a) A Rural Impact Report shall include all
46 of the following:

47 (1) An analysis of the bill's direct and indirect
48 effects on rural communities, including economic, social, and
49 regulatory impacts.

50 (2) A specific assessment of the potential consequences
51 for farmers and agricultural businesses.

52 (3) A localized breakdown of effects by legislative
53 district and affected rural communities.

54 (4) A comparative analysis of the bill's projected
55 impact on rural districts versus suburban and urban districts,
56 including any identified disparities or differential



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consequences.

(5) An assessment of the bill's impact on rural school districts, including, but not limited to, school funding and budget allocations; student enrollment and demographic shifts; access to educational resources, including technology and extracurricular programs; teacher recruitment, retention, and workforce stability; and potential for school closures or consolidations due to legislative changes.

(6) Identification of potential benefits, costs, and unintended consequences of the proposed legislation.

(b) Reports shall incorporate data from relevant agencies, industry experts, education officials, and rural stakeholders to ensure accuracy and comprehensiveness.

Section 5. (a) The Legislative Services Agency shall endeavor to complete the Rural Impact Report within 30 days of receiving a valid request.

(b) If additional time is needed due to data limitations, the Legislative Services Agency shall notify the requesting legislator in writing with an estimated completion date.

Section 6. (a) Completed Rural Impact Reports shall be made publicly available through the official website of the Legislature.

(b) Copies shall also be provided to the requesting legislator, relevant legislative committees, and rural stakeholder organizations upon request.

Section 7. This act shall become effective on October 1, 2025.