

SJR92 ENROLLED



1 SJR92
2 V7B9HPV-2
3 By Senators Gudger, Albritton, Allen, Barfoot, Beasley, Bell,
4 Butler, Carnley, Chambliss, Chesteen, Coleman,
5 Coleman-Madison, Elliott, Figures, Givhan, Hatcher, Hovey,
6 Jones, Kelley, Kitchens, Livingston, Melson, Orr, Price,
7 Roberts, Sessions, Shelnutt, Singleton, Smitherman, Stewart,
8 Stutts, Waggoner, Weaver, Williams
9 RFD: Rules
10 First Read: 06-May-25



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1 Enrolled, An Act,

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4 SJR____ ENCOURAGING THE ALABAMA GROWTH ALLIANCE TO DEVELOP
5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF RURAL ALABAMA THROUGH
6 THE ALABAMA RURAL ROADMAP.

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8 WHEREAS, the prosperity and well-being of the State
9 of Alabama are fundamentally dependent upon the economic
10 health and vitality of its communities, particularly those
11 in diverse and strategically important rural regions; and

12 WHEREAS, many rural counties in Alabama face critical
13 challenges, including aging infrastructure, limited access
14 to capital for small businesses, a shortage of skilled
15 workers, declining populations, and inadequate access to
16 quality health care, all of which threaten economic
17 viability and the overall progress of the state; and

18 WHEREAS, a comprehensive, coordinated, and strategic
19 approach is urgently needed to address these multifaceted
20 challenges, to leverage the unique strengths of rural
21 communities, and to foster sustainable growth and
22 opportunity across the diverse landscape of Alabama; and

23 WHEREAS, the Alabama Growth Alliance, with its
24 expertise in fostering economic development and strategic
25 planning, is uniquely positioned to spearhead the
26 development of a statewide rural development program; and

27 WHEREAS, a focused and sustained commitment to
28 enhancing infrastructure, fostering business development and



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entrepreneurship, strengthening workforce development and training, improving quality of life and placemaking, and ensuring access to quality rural health care is essential for the long-term prosperity and resilience of Alabama's rural communities; and

WHEREAS, this body recognizes the urgent need to prioritize the development and implementation of a robust statewide rural development program to secure a brighter and more prosperous future for all Alabamians, regardless of geographic location; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That the Alabama Growth Alliance is strongly encouraged to develop an Alabama Rural Roadmap initiative, to serve as the cornerstone of a comprehensive statewide rural development program designed to provide recommendations to revitalize and empower Alabama's rural communities under the direction of a strong leadership team.

(a)(1) The leadership team of the initiative shall consist of the Senate President Pro Tempore, or his or her designee, as chair of the initiative, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, or his or her designee, as vice chair of the initiative, who both shall appoint and convene a group of legislators, business leaders, economic developers, and other relevant individuals to provide oversight of the program and ensure that the Alabama Growth Alliance is compiling all relevant data and providing for the successful completion and transmission of the Alabama Rural Roadmap to the Legislature.



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57 (2) The Senate President Pro Tempore, or his or her
58 designee, shall coordinate appointments to the leadership
59 team to assure the membership of the team is inclusive and
60 reflects the racial, gender, geographic, urban, rural, and
61 economic diversity of the state.

62 (b) The Alabama Growth Alliance shall do all of the
63 following:

64 (1) Actively engage all relevant stakeholders,
65 including local government officials, community leaders,
66 business owners, and residents in support of this
67 initiative.

68 (2) Collaborate with and leverage the expertise of
69 Alabama's universities, research institutions, relevant
70 state agencies, and private sector industries to solicit
71 recommendations, conduct rigorous studies, and identify
72 innovative and sustainable opportunities for rural economic
73 development across the state.

74 (3) Accurately identify distressed rural areas based
75 on clearly defined and measurable criteria, conduct in-depth
76 analyses to determine the underlying causes contributing to
77 the economic vulnerabilities and challenges faced by these
78 communities, and include within the Alabama Rural Roadmap
79 specific, actionable, and measurable policy recommendations
80 and strategies focused on, but not limited to, the following
81 key areas:

82 a. Infrastructure Development: Investing in and
83 modernizing critical infrastructure, including enhancing
84 industrial sites, strengthening and expanding electric, gas,



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85 and water infrastructure to meet the evolving needs of
86 businesses and residents, expanding broadband access to
87 bridge the digital divide, and developing and improving
88 essential community buildings and downtown districts.

89 b. Business Development and Entrepreneurship:

90 Leveraging the resources and expertise of Innovate Alabama
91 to foster a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship,
92 bolstering and expanding small business support programs and
93 networks to provide technical assistance, increasing access
94 to capital and mentorship opportunities, facilitating access
95 to diverse banking programs and financial resources, and
96 creating more business incubators and accelerators in rural
97 areas to nurture startups and support the growth of existing
98 businesses.

99 c. Workforce Development and Training: Implementing

100 and expanding regional training initiatives to equip rural
101 residents with the skills needed to succeed in high-demand
102 industries, expanding access to online Career and Technical
103 Education programs and facilities to provide flexible and
104 accessible training opportunities, and developing
105 comprehensive strategies to address workforce shortages and
106 meet the evolving workforce needs of rural employers.

107 d. Quality of Life and Placemaking: Developing a

108 holistic and sustainable strategy for the creation of
109 placemaking grants that are designed to support
110 community-driven initiatives that enhance the
111 attractiveness, livability, and cultural vibrancy of rural



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112 communities, foster a sense of place and community pride,
113 through funding by the Alabama Development Fund.

114 e. Improving Rural Health care: Identifying and
115 proposing long-term, sustainable, and innovative solutions
116 to improve access to quality and affordable health care
117 services in rural Alabama, address health care disparities,
118 and enhance the overall health and well-being of rural
119 residents.

120 (c) The Alabama Rural Roadmap shall be completed and
121 submitted to the Governor, the Chair of the Senate Fiscal
122 Responsibility and Economic Development Committee, the Chair
123 of the House of Representatives Fiscal Responsibility
124 Committee, and the Secretary of the Alabama Department of
125 Commerce no later than the fifth legislative day of the 2026
126 Regular Session, at which point the initiative shall stand
127 dissolved of any future duties.

128 (d) It is the intent of this body to give full and
129 careful consideration to the recommendations contained
130 within the Alabama Rural Roadmap and to consider any
131 suggested legislation to effectively implement strategies
132 and achieve the goals prescribed by this resolution.



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President and Presiding Officer of the Senate

Speaker of the House of Representatives

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Senate 06-May-25

I hereby certify that the within Act originated in and
passed the Senate.

Patrick Harris,
Secretary.

House of Representatives
Amended and passed: 07-May-25

Senate concurred in House amendment 14-May-25

By: Senator Gudger