

Executive Order Number Nine - The Creation Of An Economic Development Ombudsperson And Rapid Response Teams To Promote Prosperity And Sustainable Growth

TO: HEADS OF ALL STATE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

RE: THE CREATION OF AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OMBUDSPERSON AND RAPID RESPONSE TEAMS TO PROMOTE PROSPERITY AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

WHEREAS, as Governor, I am committed to expanding economic opportunity for all Delawareans and improving the standard of living for future generations; and

WHEREAS, an important part of my administration's strategy is to have a strong, proactive economic development staff identifying and pursuing opportunities to grow existing businesses and to attract new ones; and

WHEREAS, fiscal impact studies in Delaware and across the country demonstrate that commercial and industrial development generates a net gain for taxpayers, adding to the State's tax base as well as increasing employment options for citizens; and

WHEREAS, these economic development opportunities sometimes require extraordinary efforts to clear administrative, intergovernmental, procedural, financial, staffing, and infrastructure hurdles that can impede the successful attraction, retention and growth of businesses; and

WHEREAS, Delaware enjoys a strategic advantage over the other states in this dynamic and challenging economic environment because of its close-knit business, government, and educational communities and its potential for responding quickly to new opportunities; and

WHEREAS, all State agencies, as well as Delaware's counties and municipal governments, have significant roles to play in anticipating and reacting to economic development opportunities in a timely, coordinated, and comprehensive manner; and

WHEREAS, it is critical to the continued prosperity of citizens throughout Delaware that State and local governments partner to put infrastructure, resources and lines of communication in place so they can be deployed expediently to support an economic development initiative that aligns with the Governor's priorities.

NOW THEREFORE, I, JACK A. MARKELL, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Delaware, do hereby DECLARE and ORDER that:

1. The Governor will designate a member of his Executive Staff to serve as an Economic Development Ombudsperson (hereinafter "Ombudsperson").
2. The Ombudsperson will serve as a liaison to businesses, communities, local economic development organizations, regulatory agencies, local governments and State agencies.
3. When the Director of the Delaware Economic Development Office, in consultation with the Office of the Governor, determines that a particular economic development opportunity

warrants a rapid response and extraordinary collaboration between and among State agencies and local governments, the Director of the Delaware Economic Development Office will direct the Ombudsperson to facilitate an efficient and expedient conduct of the permitting process by coordinating with State agencies and local governments in a manner that deploys resources effectively and hastens those processes within the parameters of existing State laws and local ordinances and controlling local land-use authority. In no event shall the ombudsperson suggest, direct or otherwise promote that any permitting process result in a particular outcome.

4. Each Cabinet-level Department will identify a Rapid Response team within their agency, or individual resource in the case of smaller agencies. The Rapid Response team's and/or individual resource's responsibilities will include:
 - a. Responding, at the direction of the Ombudsperson, to significant economic development initiatives; and
 - b. Providing the requisite expertise, authority, and staff resources appropriate to facilitate rapid resolution of issues related to the review and consideration of significant economic development projects; and
 - c. Identifying opportunities to improve and expedite the review and permitting processes.

APPROVED this 18th day August, 2009