

**Senate Bill 2885**  
**Sponsored by Sen. Terry Link**  
**Investing Public Funds for the Greatest Public Benefits**

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Senate Bill 2885 would allow the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) to make the most efficient use of limited state funds while assisting businesses with progressive and low-cost methods to recruit and retain employees and increase assistance to companies that create jobs in areas most in need of new jobs.

Using easily accessible data, DCEO would be able to:

- apply limited state economic development funds wisely;
- reduce commute time resulting in less traffic congestion and air pollution;
- promote the availability of workforce housing near jobs;
- help businesses build a stable workforce; and
- support economic development in areas of the state with a surplus of available labor.

SB 2885 would give DCEO the option of offering increased economic development benefits. The benefits would be limited to employers qualifying for EDGE tax credits under any of the following three different ways.

1) EDGE applicants could provide DCEO with information about the business location, including data on affordable workforce housing and/or access to public transit near the site. If DCEO determines the employer is in a “location efficient” site, the employer receives up to 10 percent in added tax credits through EDGE or an extension of EDGE credits for additional years.

2) If DCEO determines the employer is not in a location efficient site, the employer could still qualify for the bonus if it chooses to give DCEO a plan to increase the housing and/or transportation options of its employees. Such plans might include an employer assisted housing plan, shuttle services, pre-tax transit cards, or carpooling assistance. Many Illinois employers have already implemented these low cost plans to improve their recruitment and retention efforts.

3) SB 2885 also addresses the need to create more jobs where they are needed most. If an employer qualifying for EDGE creates jobs in a Labor Surplus Area as defined by the Illinois Department of Employment Security, the employer would be eligible to receive the EDGE bonus, regardless of the availability of affordable workforce housing or access to public transit.

## SB 2885

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### **Everyone Benefits:**

#### Taxpayers win:

- DCEO funds would be spent, whenever possible, to maximize the use of existing infrastructure and avoid additional expenses for publicly financed transportation.
- Illinois would remain competitive in attracting and retaining businesses to our state.

#### Employers win:

- Employers in location efficient sites or those with housing/transportation plans would have a more stable workforce and spend less on hiring new employees.
- DCEO would help employers develop low-cost plans to ease employees' commutes.

#### Workers and other residents win:

- Workers spend less time commuting and more time with their families.
- Residents near the worksite would spend less time in traffic when fewer workers clog the highways and roads near the worksite.
- Residents and workers enjoy cleaner air as pollution decreases over time.

### **It Can Be Done .... And Has:**

#### Illinois Employers Leading the Way:

- Many employers -- such as Boeing and Abbott Labs -- are choosing areas with public transit options.
- Many employers choosing to locate farther away from housing and public transit have developed programs to increase employees' housing/transportation options. Examples include Bloomington's Wheels to Work program run by the local YWCA.

SB 2885 is supported by:

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