



PA 19-143—HB 6939

Planning and Development Committee

AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MUNICIPAL CULTURAL DISTRICTS

SUMMARY: The act allows municipalities, by vote of their legislative bodies, to establish one or more cultural districts to promote the public’s educational, cultural, economic, and general welfare by (1) marketing arts and culture attractions, (2) encouraging artists and artistic and cultural enterprises, and (3) promoting tourism. Municipalities’ legislative bodies may appropriate funds to carry out the act’s purposes.

Cultural districts must comply with standards and criteria established by the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD). They cannot extend beyond the boundaries of the establishing municipality.

Each municipality establishing a cultural district must also establish a cultural district commission. The municipal legislative body, in consultation with the DECD commissioner, determines the commission’s membership, including the number of members, their terms, and the process for making appointments and filling vacancies.

The act requires each municipality’s legislative body to authorize these commissions to exercise any power and perform any duty necessary or desirable to carry out the act’s purposes, including:

1. consulting and collaborating with the DECD commissioner and regional service organizations for assistance with marketing, advocacy, and other efforts and
2. applying for, soliciting, or accepting any grant, contribution, gift, bequest, devise, or other donation.

Under the act, “municipality” means a town, city, borough, consolidated town and city, or consolidated town and borough. “Regional service organizations” are organizations that DECD designates as regional providers of arts and cultural leadership to support the state and municipal economies.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2019