

By: Gonzales of Hidalgo

H.B. No. 397

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation of the Bureau for Economic Development of the Border Region.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subtitle F, Title 4, Government Code, is amended by adding Chapter 490D to read as follows:

CHAPTER 490D. BUREAU FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE BORDER REGION

Sec. 490D.001. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

(1) "Border region" means the portion of this state located:

(A) not more than 100 kilometers from the state's international border; or

(B) in a county located on an international border.

(2) "Bureau" means the Bureau for Economic Development of the Border Region.

Sec. 490D.002. BUREAU; MEMBERS. (a) The Bureau for Economic Development of the Border Region is a partnership of participating public and private entities administered by a public or private institution of higher education that is designated by the steering committee of the bureau and agrees to serve in that capacity.

(b) The bureau has a steering committee that consists of seven members as follows:

1           (1) one member appointed by the lieutenant governor;

2           (2) one member appointed by the speaker of the house of  
3 representatives;

4           (3) three members appointed by the administration of  
5 the institution of higher education;

6           (4) the chair of the House Committee on Border and  
7 Intergovernmental Affairs, designated by the speaker of the house  
8 of representatives; and

9           (5) the chair of the senate committee to which border  
10 affairs are referred, designated by the lieutenant governor.

11           (c) The members of the bureau's steering committee  
12 appointed under Subsections (b)(1) and (2) must be residents of the  
13 border region. The other appointed or designated members of the  
14 steering committee may be residents of the border region.

15           (d) Members of the bureau's steering committee must be  
16 selected to provide the bureau expertise relating to financial  
17 planning and development, construction, engineering, and trade.

18           (e) The institution of higher education that administers  
19 the bureau shall provide educational expertise to the bureau.

20           Sec. 490D.003. TERMS. (a) The appointed members of the  
21 bureau's steering committee serve staggered terms of two years,  
22 with as near as possible to one-half of the members' terms expiring  
23 February 1 of each year.

24           (b) The members of the bureau's steering committee  
25 designated under Sections 490D.002(b)(4) and (5) serve terms that  
26 expire February 1 of each odd-numbered year.

27           Sec. 490D.004. MEETINGS; OFFICERS. (a) The bureau's

1 steering committee shall hold at least one regular meeting  
2 annually.

3 (b) At its first meeting, the steering committee shall  
4 select from its membership a presiding officer.

5 (c) The steering committee shall meet subject to the call of  
6 the presiding officer.

7 Sec. 490D.005. DUTIES. The bureau shall:

8 (1) facilitate research in fields of study affecting  
9 the economy in the border region;

10 (2) make recommendations to the legislature regarding  
11 the provision of economic and financial education to persons living  
12 in the border region;

13 (3) draft and submit reports to advise the legislature  
14 about economic development opportunities in the border region;

15 (4) provide evaluation of specific proposals for use  
16 of economic development funds in the border region, including tax  
17 abatement agreements;

18 (5) consult with the Texas Economic Development and  
19 Tourism Office within the office of the governor on issues related  
20 to the border region;

21 (6) study and report on opportunities to improve trade  
22 across the international border; and

23 (7) make recommendations to the legislature about the  
24 establishment of infrastructure projects to assist multiple  
25 counties in the border region.

26 Sec. 490D.006. FUNDING. (a) In addition to any amount  
27 appropriated by the legislature, the bureau may apply for and

1 accept funds from the federal government or any other public or  
2 private entity to carry out the bureau's duties.

3 (b) The bureau or any member of the bureau's steering  
4 committee may also solicit and accept pledges, gifts, and  
5 endowments from private sources on the bureau's behalf. The bureau  
6 shall actively seek gifts from businesses and organizations that  
7 represent businesses to support the bureau's functions. A pledge,  
8 gift, or endowment solicited under this section must be consistent  
9 with the purposes of the bureau.

10 Sec. 490D.007. FACILITIES AND OTHER ASSISTANCE. The  
11 institution of higher education that administers the bureau may  
12 provide facilities and services to further the purposes of the  
13 bureau.

14 Sec. 490D.008. DURATION. Section 2110.008 does not apply  
15 to the bureau.

16 SECTION 2. (a) In appointing the initial appointed members  
17 of the steering committee of the Bureau for Economic Development of  
18 the Border Region under Section 490D.002, Government Code, as added  
19 by this Act:

20 (1) the lieutenant governor shall appoint one member  
21 to serve a term expiring February 1, 2012;

22 (2) the speaker of the house of representatives shall  
23 appoint one member to serve a term expiring February 1, 2012; and

24 (3) the administration of the institution of higher  
25 education that administers the bureau shall appoint one member to  
26 serve a term expiring February 1, 2012, and two members to serve a  
27 term expiring February 1, 2013.

1           (b) As soon as practicable after the initial members of the  
2 steering committee of the Bureau for Economic Development of the  
3 Border Region have been appointed or designated under Section  
4 490D.002(b)(1), (2), (4), or (5), Government Code, as added by this  
5 Act, those initial members of the steering committee shall  
6 designate the institution of higher education as required by  
7 Section 490D.002, Government Code, as added by this Act.

8           SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2011.