

CS/HB 843 — Rural Enterprise Zones

by the Finance and Tax Council, Rep. Boyd and others (CS/SB 1724 by Commerce Committee, Senators Dean, Lynn, and Wilson)

This bill specifies that any rural economic development catalyst site created prior to January 1, 2010, that is not located currently in a rural enterprise zone (EZ) must be designated as a rural EZ by the Governor's Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development, upon request from the site's host county.

That request must include the catalyst site's legal description and the contact information for the development authority that oversees the site's activities. These new rural EZs will offer the same business incentives as those designated pursuant to ch. 290, F.S., and must adhere to the same state reporting requirements.

A host county's development authority, which is a public body, will be responsible for serving as the catalyst site/EZ's reporting entity, and may enter into memoranda of agreement, if necessary, to implement this act.

The major difference between traditional EZs and the rural EZs created pursuant to this legislation is that the catalyst sites/rural EZs are not required to meet the eligibility determination that the site suffers from pervasive poverty, unemployment, and general distress.

This legislation affects the two catalyst sites located in Columbia and Suwannee counties.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2010.

Vote: Senate 37-0; House 114-0