

## RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

ACT 331 (HB 622)

2021 Regular Session

Thompson

Existing law creates the office of rural development within the office of the governor and provides for the powers and authorities of the office and executive director. Existing law defines "rural development and revitalization" to mean those policies, programs, laws, regulations, or other matters having to do with rural areas, including but not limited to economic development, employment, local government services and management, business, agriculture, environment, land use and natural resources, human services and community life, health care, education, transportation, community facilities, and housing.

New law adds "broadband connectivity" and "water quality and sewer treatment" as policy areas considered to be a part of rural development and revitalization.

New law defines "regional planning commission districts" as the eight regional planning commissions created pursuant to existing law. Also modifies the definition of "rural development and revitalization" to include broadband connectivity, water quality, and sewer treatment.

Existing law specifies that the head of the office of rural development is a director appointed by the governor. Further specifies that the director can employ necessary staff to carry out the duties and functions of the office.

New law requires the director to hire eight new regional directors to be placed in each of the regional planning commission districts of the state. New law requires each applicant for regional director to reside in the district for which he seeks to be employed and requires each regional director to remain a resident of the district he is employed in for the entirety of his employment.

New law reestablishes previously repealed law to create the "Rural Development Fund" and "Rural Development Program" for the purpose of mitigating the rapid deterioration of rural health, education, infrastructure, and other systems essential to the socioeconomic well-being of the state's rural population.

New law provides for permissible sources of monies to deposit into the fund and guidelines for administering the funds and program.

Effective August 1, 2021.

(Amends R.S. 3:312(4) and (5), 313(8)-(10), and 314(B); Adds R.S. 3:313(11) and 321-323)