
DIGEST

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HB 624 Engrossed

2023 Regular Session

Butler

Abstract: Creates the Evangeline Economic Development Authority as a political subdivision in Evangeline Parish.

Proposed law creates and provides for the Evangeline Economic Development Authority as a political subdivision in Evangeline Parish for the purpose of performing the functions of an economic and industrial development agency, including but not limited to public relations, advertising, marketing, government relations, financial assistance, industrial and economic research, and industrial programming and solicitation. Provides that the boundaries of the district encompass all of the territory in Evangeline Parish.

Proposed law provides that the district shall be governed by an 11-member board of commissioners composed as follows:

- (1) Five members appointed jointly by the mayors of the municipalities located in Evangeline Parish. One of the five members shall be appointed from a list of three nominations submitted by the Evangeline Parish Farm Bureau.
- (2) Two members appointed by the governing authority of Evangeline Parish.
- (3) One member appointed by the Evangeline Parish School Board.
- (4) One member appointed by the governing board of the Evangeline Parish Chamber of Commerce.
- (5) One member appointed jointly by the governing boards of the two hospital providers located in Evangeline Parish.
- (6) One member appointed by the governing board of South Louisiana Community College.

Provides that members serve four-year staggered terms.

Proposed law provides that the district, through the board, shall have and exercise all powers of a political subdivision necessary or convenient for the carrying out of its objects and purposes, including but not limited to the following:

- (1) To sue and to be sued.

- (2) To adopt, use, and alter at will a corporate seal.
- (3) To adopt bylaws and rules and regulations.
- (4) To receive by gift, grant, donation, or otherwise any sum of money, property, aid, or assistance from the U.S., the state, or any political subdivision thereof, or any person, firm, or corporation.
- (5) To enter into contracts, agreements, or cooperative endeavors with the state and its political subdivisions or political corporations and with any public or private association, corporation, business entity, or individual.
- (6) To appoint officers, agents, and employees, prescribe their duties, and fix their compensation.
- (7) To acquire by purchase, gift, grant, donation, lease, or otherwise such property as may be necessary or desirable for carrying out the objectives and purposes of the board.

Proposed law authorizes the board to establish an advisory board to assist in the task of economic and industrial development and to determine the composition of the board's membership and terms of its members.

Proposed law requires the board to prepare or cause to be prepared a plan or plans, specifying the public improvements, facilities, and services proposed to be furnished, constructed, or acquired for the district and to conduct public hearings, publish notice with respect thereto, and disseminate information as it, in the exercise of its sound discretion, may deem to be appropriate or advisable and in the public interest.

Proposed law provides that any plan may specify and encompass any public services, capital improvements, and facilities which Evangeline Parish is authorized to undertake, furnish, or provide under the constitution and laws of the state of Louisiana. Provides that such specified public services, improvements, and facilities shall be special and in addition to all services, improvements, and facilities which the parish is then furnishing or providing or may then or in the future be obligated to furnish or provide within the district.

Proposed law requires any plan to include an estimate of the annual and total cost of acquiring, constructing, or providing the services, improvements, or facilities set forth therein. Requires the board to submit the plan to the parish governing authority and requires the parish governing authority to review and consider the plan. Provides that the board need not receive approval of the parish governing authority prior to implementing the plan.

Proposed law provides that all services to be furnished within the district pursuant to any plan finally and conclusively adopted may be furnished, supplied, and administered by the parish through its regularly constituted departments, agencies, boards, commissions, and instrumentalities. Provides that all capital improvements and facilities to be acquired, constructed, or provided within the district

may likewise be so acquired, constructed, or provided by the parish through its regularly constituted departments, agencies, boards, commissions, and instrumentalities to avoid the duplication of administrative and management efforts and expense in the implementation of any plan adopted for the benefit of the district. Authorizes the board to enter into intergovernmental local service contracts with the parish in order to provide services or provide, construct, or acquire capital improvements or facilities.

Proposed law authorizes the district to levy a sales and use tax, subject to voter approval. Provides that the tax rate shall not to exceed 1%. Proposed law authorizes the district to issue revenue bonds payable from an irrevocable pledge and dedication of up to the full amount of "tax increments" available to an economic development district as provided in proposed law and in present law (Part II of Chapter 27 of Title 33) which is derived from any project or projects of the district.

Proposed law specifies that a "tax increment" consists of that portion of any tax levied within the district by a local governmental subdivision or other tax recipient body determined and pledged in the manner provided for in present law (Part II of Chapter 27 of Title 33). However, if the proceeds of the tax have been expressly dedicated to another purpose set forth in a proposition approved by the electorate of the local governmental subdivision or other tax recipient body, then the tax proceeds may not be used as a tax increment until a proposition which authorizes such use is submitted to and approved by the electorate.

(Adds R.S. 33:2740.70.3)