

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 517
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DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Currently, the Texas-Mexico border region has the highest unemployment rate in the country and has one of the lowest per-capita income rates. Thus, there is a necessity to invest in and create an economic engine in the Texas-Mexico border region which would allow that region to grow and prosper. As proposed, S.B. 517 amends the Government Code to establish a Texas Border Strategic Investment Commission to bring a statewide perspective to strategic Texas-Mexico Border region initiatives. This bill creates a commission to identify strategic economic development initiatives that would improve the economic health along the Texas-Mexico border.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Title 4F, Government Code, by adding Chapter 489, as follows:

CHAPTER 489. TEXAS BORDER STRATEGIC INVESTMENT COMMISSION

Sec. 489.001. DEFINITIONS. Defines “commission” and “Texas-Mexico border region.”

Sec. 489.002. PURPOSE. Sets forth the purpose of the Texas Border Strategic Investment Commission (commission).

Sec. 489.003. TEXAS BORDER STRATEGIC INVESTMENT COMMISSION;
MEMBERS. (a) Provides that the commission is established.

(b) Provides that the commission is composed of certain state officials.

(c) Requires the lieutenant governor to serve as the chair of the commission.

Sec. 489.004. FUNCTIONS OF COMMISSION. (a) Requires the commission, by December 1 of each even-numbered year, to identify and recommend funding for strategic economic development initiatives in the six metropolitan statistical areas of the Texas-Mexico border region.

(b) Requires the strategic investment initiatives recommended to be identified using certain criteria.

Sec. 489.005. REPORT. (a) Requires the commission, by December 1 of each even-numbered year, to file a report with the legislature that states the strategic investment initiatives recommended by the commission during the preceding two-year period and identifies the initiatives that received funding during the preceding fiscal biennium. Requires the report to

include any recommendations for legislative action the commission considers appropriate to further the function of the commission.

(b) Requires the commission to evaluate certain performance measures, in addition to the other identified performance measures, for those recommended initiatives that received funding during the biennium in which the report is made.

Sec. 489.006. FUNDING. (a) Authorizes the commission, in addition to any amount appropriated by the legislature, to request state agencies to apply for funds from the federal government or any other public or private entity. Authorizes the commission to solicit grants, gifts, and donations from private sources on the state's behalf. Requires the use of a gift, grant, or donation solicited under this section to be consistent with the purposes of the commission.

(b) Requires the commission to review and authorizes it to require reports of state agencies that receive appropriations, gifts, grants, donations, or endowments as a result of the commission's recommendations.

(c) Authorizes a state agency to accept a gift, grant, donation, or endowment received as a result of the commission's recommendations.

Sec. 489.007. STUDY OF PERSISTENT POVERTY COUNTIES. Authorizes the commission to study counties with persistent poverty, as classified by the Economic Research Service of the United States Department of Agriculture.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2003.