

By: Shapleigh

S.B. No. 517

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation of the Texas Border Strategic Investment Commission.

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

SECTION 1. Subtitle F, Title 4, Government Code, is amended by adding Chapter 489 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 489. TEXAS BORDER STRATEGIC INVESTMENT COMMISSION

Sec. 489.001. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

(1) "Commission" means the Texas Border Strategic Investment Commission.

(2) "Texas-Mexico border region" has the meaning assigned by Section 2056.002.

Sec. 489.002. PURPOSE. The future economic health of this state is dependent in part on investing in the Texas-Mexico border region. The Texas-Mexico border region has the highest poverty and unemployment rates in the country, and the per capita income is the lowest in the country. Texas should invest in and create economic engines in the Texas-Mexico border region that will allow that part of the state to grow, prosper, and participate in the Texas dream. Strategic funding for one region of the state, even where the benefit to the whole state is the primary objective, is politically difficult to achieve in the legislative process. Therefore, this commission is established to bring a statewide perspective to strategic Texas-Mexico border region investments.

1 Sec. 489.003. TEXAS BORDER STRATEGIC INVESTMENT
2 COMMISSION; MEMBERS. (a) The Texas Border Strategic Investment
3 Commission is established.

4 (b) The commission is composed of:

5 (1) the lieutenant governor;

6 (2) the speaker of the house of representatives;

7 (3) the comptroller;

8 (4) the commissioner of agriculture;

9 (5) the chair of the senate finance committee;

10 (6) the chair of the house appropriations committee;

11 and

12 (7) the secretary of state.

13 (c) The lieutenant governor shall serve as the chair of the
14 commission.

15 Sec. 489.004. FUNCTIONS OF COMMISSION. (a) Not later than
16 December 1 of each even-numbered year, the commission shall
17 identify and recommend funding for strategic economic development
18 initiatives in the six metropolitan statistical areas in the
19 Texas-Mexico border region.

20 (b) The strategic investment initiatives recommended shall
21 be identified using criteria that include the following:

22 (1) whether the initiative recommended is the most
23 significant investment the state can make in a key regional cluster
24 to produce a sound foundation for economic development;

25 (2) whether the investment recommended leverages
26 other significant funds or has an objective and calculable rate of
27 return;

1 (3) whether the recommendation is a clearly defined
2 concept with significant regional support;

3 (4) whether the concept recommended requires special
4 investment to be accomplished in the near future because similar
5 and timely funding by local, state, or federal sources in the normal
6 appropriations process is unlikely; and

7 (5) whether the investment recommended will increase
8 the per capita income and decrease the unemployment rate of the
9 affected area.

10 Sec. 489.005. REPORT. (a) Not later than December 1 of
11 each even-numbered year, the commission shall file a report with
12 the legislature that states the strategic investment initiatives
13 recommended by the commission during the preceding two-year period
14 and identifies the initiatives that received funding during the
15 preceding fiscal biennium. The report must include any
16 recommendations for legislative action the commission considers
17 appropriate to further the function of the commission.

18 (b) For those recommended initiatives that received funding
19 during the biennium in which the report is made, the commission
20 shall, in addition to evaluating other performance measures
21 identified by the commission, evaluate the following performance
22 measures in the report:

23 (1) the number of jobs created by the initiative and
24 the nature of economic development created by the initiative;

25 (2) the impact of any economic development on wage
26 rates in the affected metropolitan statistical area;

27 (3) the wages and benefits paid by the employer of the

1 created jobs compared to the county-wide average wage for the
2 particular industry sector that received funding;

3 (4) the other funds that were leveraged or the
4 calculable rate of return from the investment in a particular
5 initiative;

6 (5) the initiative's ability to attract new industry
7 and economic development to the Texas-Mexico border region; and

8 (6) the duration and quality of the jobs, economic
9 development, and opportunities created.

10 Sec. 489.006. FUNDING. (a) In addition to any amount
11 appropriated by the legislature, the commission may request state
12 agencies to apply for funds from the federal government or any other
13 public or private entity. The commission may also solicit grants,
14 gifts, and donations from private sources on the state's behalf.
15 The use of a gift, grant, or donation solicited under this section
16 must be consistent with the purposes of the commission.

17 (b) The commission shall review and may require reports of
18 state agencies that receive appropriations, gifts, grants,
19 donations, or endowments as a result of the commission's
20 recommendations.

21 (c) A state agency may accept a gift, grant, donation, or
22 endowment received as a result of the commission's recommendations.

23 Sec. 489.007. STUDY OF PERSISTENT POVERTY COUNTIES. The
24 commission may study counties with persistent poverty, as
25 classified by the Economic Research Service of the United States
26 Department of Agriculture.

27 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives

S.B. No. 517

1 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
2 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
3 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
4 Act takes effect September 1, 2003.