

By: Merritt

H.B. No. 3818

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation and operation of the Texas-Louisiana border region economic development steering committee.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the orderly economic development of the area of this state near the Texas-Louisiana border is of concern to the entire state.

SECTION 2. Chapter 2056, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 2056.012 to read as follows:

Sec. 2056.012. STRATEGIC PLAN FOR TEXAS-LOUISIANA BORDER REGION. (a) In this section:

(1) "Committee" means the Texas-Louisiana border region economic development steering committee.

(2) "Fund" means the Texas-Louisiana border region economic development steering committee fund.

(3) "Texas-Louisiana border region" has the meaning assigned by Section 2056.002.

(b) The committee consists of:

(1) the county judges of the five most populous counties in the Texas-Louisiana border region;

(2) the county judge of any other county in the Texas-Louisiana border region, if the commissioners court elects to join the committee; and

(3) any representatives from economic development

1 councils serving the Texas-Louisiana border region, as selected by  
2 the committee.

3 (c) The committee shall develop a strategic plan for the  
4 economic development of the Texas-Louisiana border region, in the  
5 same manner as a state agency is required by this chapter to make a  
6 strategic plan for its operations, and may take action to implement  
7 the strategic plan.

8 (d) The members of the committee shall elect one member as  
9 presiding officer. The presiding officer may select another member  
10 to preside in the absence of the presiding officer. The presiding  
11 officer shall call at least one meeting of the committee each year  
12 and may call other meetings as the presiding officer determines are  
13 appropriate. A member of the committee is not entitled to  
14 compensation for serving as a member but is entitled to  
15 reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred while serving as a  
16 member. The committee shall adopt rules for its proceedings and  
17 appoint an executive committee. The committee may employ and  
18 compensate persons to carry out the powers and duties of the  
19 committee. Chapter 171, Local Government Code, applies to a member  
20 of the committee in the same manner as that chapter applies to a  
21 local public official.

22 (e) The committee is a public body and a political  
23 subdivision of the state exercising public and essential  
24 governmental functions and has all the powers necessary or  
25 convenient to carry out the purposes of this section. The  
26 committee, in the exercise of powers under this section, is  
27 performing only governmental functions and is a governmental unit

1 within the meaning of Chapter 101, Civil Practice and Remedies  
2 Code. The committee is subject every 12th year to review under  
3 Chapter 325.

4 (f) The committee may sue and be sued in all courts, may  
5 institute and prosecute suits without giving security for costs,  
6 and may appeal from a judgment without giving a supersedeas or cost  
7 bond. An action at law or in equity against the committee may be  
8 brought in any county in the Texas-Louisiana border region.

9 (g) The committee may acquire by grant, purchase, gift,  
10 devise, lease, or otherwise and may hold, use, sell, lease, or  
11 dispose of real and personal property, licenses, patents, rights,  
12 and interests necessary, convenient, or useful for the full  
13 exercise of its powers.

14 (h) The committee may enter into a joint ownership agreement  
15 with any person.

16 (i) The committee may make contracts, leases, and  
17 agreements with, and accept grants and loans from, the United  
18 States, this state, agencies and political subdivisions of this  
19 state or another state of the United States, the United Mexican  
20 States, or a state of the United Mexican States, and other persons  
21 and entities and may perform any act necessary for the full exercise  
22 of the powers vested in it.

23 (j) Notwithstanding Chapter 551, the committee may hold an  
24 open or closed meeting by telephone conference call. The meeting is  
25 subject to the notice requirements applicable to other meetings.  
26 The notice of the meeting must specify as the location of the  
27 meeting the location where meetings of the committee are usually

1 held. Each part of the meeting that is required to be open to the  
2 public shall be audible to the public at the location specified in  
3 the notice of the meeting as the location of the meeting and shall  
4 be tape-recorded. The tape recording shall be made available to the  
5 public.

6 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2007.