

1-1 By: Lucio S.B. No. 824
1-2 (In the Senate - Filed February 21, 2011; March 1, 2011,
1-3 read first time and referred to Committee on Agriculture and Rural
1-4 Affairs; March 15, 2011, rereferred to Committee on International
1-5 Relations and Trade; April 6, 2011, reported adversely, with
1-6 favorable Committee Substitute by the following vote: Yeas 4,
1-7 Nays 0; April 6, 2011, sent to printer.)

1-8 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR S.B. No. 824 By: Lucio

1-9 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
1-10 AN ACT

1-11 relating to the coordination of rural and small community
1-12 initiatives.

1-13 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

1-14 SECTION 1. Title 7, Government Code, is amended by adding
1-15 Chapter 793 to read as follows:

1-16 CHAPTER 793. COORDINATION OF RURAL AND SMALL COMMUNITIES

1-17 Sec. 793.001. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

1-18 (1) "Agency" means a state office, institution, or
1-19 other state governmental entity that is in the executive branch of
1-20 state government.

1-21 (2) "Coordinator" means the rural and small community
1-22 coordinator.

1-23 Sec. 793.002. INTERAGENCY COORDINATION OF RURAL AND SMALL
1-24 COMMUNITY INITIATIVES. (a) The governor may designate an employee
1-25 of the governor's office, an agency, or the office of the secretary
1-26 of state to act as the state's rural and small community
1-27 coordinator. The coordinator shall:

1-28 (1) examine state and federal programs that address
1-29 the needs of rural and small communities;

1-30 (2) act as an ombudsman for governmental agencies
1-31 within the state to help reduce regulations by improving
1-32 communication and cooperation between federal, state, and local
1-33 governments;

1-34 (3) study the best practices found in other states and
1-35 within the state and work with agencies to develop a coordinated
1-36 state plan to implement similar programs tailored to the needs of
1-37 the state's rural and small communities; and

1-38 (4) work with federal, state, and local governmental
1-39 entities to resolve any infrastructure, capacity, and economic
1-40 development problems to allow rural and small communities to:

1-41 (A) manage better guided growth; and

1-42 (B) become less dependent on state funds and
1-43 services.

1-44 (b) The coordinator shall coordinate programs and
1-45 initiatives that address the needs of rural and small communities:

1-46 (1) within the agency; and

1-47 (2) with other agencies and local officials involved
1-48 in rural and small community projects in the state.

1-49 (c) The coordinator shall work with other agencies and local
1-50 officials involved in rural and small community projects in the
1-51 state to:

1-52 (1) coordinate efforts to address rural and small
1-53 community issues;

1-54 (2) identify nonprofit self-help groups and community
1-55 development organizations to help with rural and small community
1-56 initiatives;

1-57 (3) set goals for each state fiscal year for rural and
1-58 small community initiatives in the state, including goals to:

1-59 (A) address regional asset identification and
1-60 development;

1-61 (B) ensure access to state and federal programs
1-62 through better outreach and application streamlining;

1-63 (C) increase international competitiveness,

2-1 import capacity, and export capacity;
 2-2 (D) increase potential for entrepreneurial and
 2-3 small business development opportunities;
 2-4 (E) improve technical assistance needed to build
 2-5 local capacity;
 2-6 (F) assist efforts for youth retention and
 2-7 workforce skill development; and
 2-8 (G) increase regional planning and coordination;
 2-9 (4) ensure that the goals set under this subsection
 2-10 are met each state fiscal year; and
 2-11 (5) coordinate state outreach efforts to rural and
 2-12 small communities and to stakeholders capable of providing needed
 2-13 services.
 2-14 (d) If the governor designates a coordinator under
 2-15 Subsection (a), the following agencies shall designate an officer
 2-16 or employee of the agency to serve as the agency's liaison to the
 2-17 coordinator:
 2-18 (1) the Texas Department of Rural Affairs;
 2-19 (2) the Texas Water Development Board;
 2-20 (3) the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality;
 2-21 (4) the Texas Department of Housing and Community
 2-22 Affairs;
 2-23 (5) the Health and Human Services Commission;
 2-24 (6) the Parks and Wildlife Department;
 2-25 (7) the Texas Department of Transportation;
 2-26 (8) the Department of Public Safety of the State of
 2-27 Texas;
 2-28 (9) the office of the secretary of state;
 2-29 (10) the Department of Agriculture;
 2-30 (11) the office of the comptroller; and
 2-31 (12) the Texas Workforce Commission.
 2-32 (e) Each agency's liaison under Subsection (d) must be a
 2-33 deputy executive director or a person of equivalent or higher
 2-34 authority at the agency. This subsection does not authorize the
 2-35 creation of a new position for rural and small community
 2-36 coordination at a state agency.
 2-37 (f) In coordinating rural and small community initiatives
 2-38 under this section, the coordinator shall consider the advice and
 2-39 recommendations of an advisory committee established under Section
 2-40 793.003.
 2-41 Sec. 793.003. TEXAS RURAL AND SMALL COMMUNITY ADVISORY
 2-42 COMMITTEES. (a) The coordinator may appoint advisory committees
 2-43 as necessary to assist the coordinator in the coordinator's duties.
 2-44 An advisory committee may be composed of private citizens and
 2-45 representatives from state and local governmental entities. A
 2-46 state or local governmental entity shall appoint a representative
 2-47 to an advisory committee at the request of the coordinator.
 2-48 (b) The coordinator shall create a rural advisory committee
 2-49 to advise the coordinator in rural policy priorities and
 2-50 administration of community development and health programs that
 2-51 impact rural communities. The coordinator shall appoint elected
 2-52 officials and community members with expertise in community
 2-53 development, economic development, and rural health to serve as
 2-54 members of the committee. The coordinator may appoint individuals
 2-55 with expertise in education or transportation, as determined by the
 2-56 coordinator, to serve as members of the committee.
 2-57 (c) Chapter 2110 does not apply to an advisory committee
 2-58 created under this section.
 2-59 Sec. 793.004. QUARTERLY REPORTS. Each entity represented
 2-60 on an advisory committee established under Section 793.003 shall
 2-61 submit quarterly reports to the coordinator regarding any action
 2-62 taken by the entity on behalf of the advisory committee or in
 2-63 furtherance of a plan or recommendation adopted by the advisory
 2-64 committee, including:
 2-65 (1) the status of projects;
 2-66 (2) the funding of expenditures;
 2-67 (3) the planning and research conducted;
 2-68 (4) the community and technical assistance provided;
 2-69 (5) the information collected; and

3-1 (6) the direct role of the entity in promoting
3-2 community and economic development through federal, state, and
3-3 local government funding.

3-4 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
3-5 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
3-6 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
3-7 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
3-8 Act takes effect September 1, 2011.

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