

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 925
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International Relations and Trade
5/21/2005
Committee Report (Amended)

AUTHOR'S/SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The 78th Legislature, Regular Session, 2003, established an interagency work group under the Office of Rural and Community Affairs to discuss rural issues and to provide information showing the impact each agency has on rural communities for use in developing rural policy. Currently, there is limited formal cooperation among the various state agencies and offices that provide programs and services in border communities and to residents living near the international border.

H.B. 925 creates an interagency work group on border issues to improve coordination of government programs and services offered in the border area.

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 Chapter 772, Government Code, by adding Section 772.011, as follows:

Sec. 772.011. INTERAGENCY WORK GROUP ON BORDER ISSUES. (a) Sets forth the purpose of creating an interagency work group .

(b) Sets forth composition of the work group.

(c) Requires the work group to meet at least quarterly in Austin to discuss border issues and to provide information showing the impact each agency has on border communities for use in developing border policy.

(d) Requires the work group, in fulfilling its duties, to consider the effect of policies instituted by the federal government impacting the border region.

(e) Defines "border region."

SECTION 2. Amends Subchapter D, Chapter 6, Water Code, by adding Section 6.112, as follows:

Sec. 6.112. BORDER PROJECTS WEBSITE. (a) Defines "border region."

(b) Authorizes the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) to maintain and update an Internet-based directory of border projects, also known as the Border Activity Tracker, containing information about projects in the border region in which a state agency is involved. Requires TWDB to establish guidelines as to which projects and information are to be included in the directory.

(c) Authorizes each state agency involved in a project in the border region to electronically submit to TWDB any information required under this section to be on the Internet-based directory of border projects. Requires each state agency to update the information promptly, not less often than quarterly.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2005.

SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE CHANGES

Committee Amendment No. 1

Amends H.B. 925, Engrossed Version, by adding a new SECTION 2 as follows:

SECTION 2. Amends Subtitle F, Title 4, Government Code, by adding Chapter 490, as follows:

CHAPTER 490. TEXAS-MEXICO STRATEGIC INVESTMENT COMMISSION

Sec. 490.001. DEFINITIONS. Defines "commission" and "Texas-Mexico border region."

Sec. 490.002. PURPOSE. Provides that the ongoing economic stability and growth of Texas and the improved quality of life for all Texans is dependent in part on coordination with neighboring states. Provides that Texas and certain Mexican border states face common challenges in the areas of infrastructure, health care, access to and availability of water, economic development and trade, and environmental protection. Provides that the Texas-Mexico Strategic Investment Commission (commission) will encourage a collaborative approach between Texas and neighboring Mexican states in specific areas so as to better address challenges and plan for the future.

Sec. 490.003. TEXAS-MEXICO STRATEGIC INVESTMENT COMMISSION; MEMBERS. (a) Provides that the Texas-Mexico Strategic Commission is established.

(b) Sets forth the composition of the commission.

(c) Requires the border commerce coordinator to serve as the chair of the commission.

Sec. 490.004. FUNCTIONS OF COMMISSION. (a) Sets forth the functions of the commission.

(b) Requires the commission to work with local governments, metropolitan planning organizations, and other appropriate community organizations in certain Texas Department of Transportation's districts, and with comparable entities in Mexican states bordering those districts, to address the unique planning and capacity needs of those areas. Requires the commission to assist those governments, and entities to identify and develop initiatives to address those needs.

(c) Requires the commission to work with industries and communities on both sides of the Texas-Mexico border to develop international industry cluster initiatives to capitalize on resources available in communities located adjacent to each other across the border.

(d) Authorizes the commission to meet at least once a year with representatives from certain Mexican states during the Border Governors Conference to discuss issues and challenges of the Texas-Mexico border region and develop strategic collaborative approaches for addressing the challenges.

Sec. 490.005. 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 also 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 purpose of the commission.

(b) Requires the commission 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 to accept a gift, grant, donation, or endowment received as a result of the commission's recommendations.

Renumbering sections accordingly.