

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 65

95TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVES WILSON (119) (Sponsor), NANCE, WALLACE, MUNZLINGER,
HODGES, FAITH, FISHER (125), SCHAD, RUESTMAN AND LOEHNER (Co-sponsors).

0211L.01I

D. ADAM CRUMBLISS, Chief Clerk

AN ACT

To repeal section 135.903, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof one new section relating to rural empowerment zone criteria.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Section 135.903, RSMo, is repealed and one new section enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as section 135.903, to read as follows:

135.903. 1. To qualify as a rural empowerment zone, an area shall meet all the following criteria:

(1) The area is one of pervasive poverty, unemployment, and general distress;

(2) At least sixty-five percent of the population has earned income below eighty percent of the median income of all residents within the state according to the last decennial census or other appropriate source as approved by the director;

(3) The population of the area is at least four hundred but not more than three thousand five hundred at the time of designation as a rural empowerment zone;

(4) The level of unemployment of persons, according to the most recent data available from the division of employment security or from the United States Bureau of Census and approved by the director, within the area exceeds one and one-half times the average rate of unemployment for the state of Missouri over the previous twelve months, or the percentage of area residents employed on a full-time basis is less than fifty percent of the statewide percentage of residents employed on a full-time basis;

(5) The area is situated more than ten miles from any existing rural empowerment zone;

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

16 (6) The area is situated in [a county of the third classification without a township form
17 of government and with more than eight thousand nine hundred twenty-five but less than nine
18 thousand twenty-five] **any county with eighteen thousand or fewer** inhabitants; and

19 (7) The area is not situated in an existing enterprise zone.

20 2. The governing body of any county in which an area may be designated a rural
21 empowerment zone shall submit to the department an application showing that the area complies
22 with the requirements of subsection 1 of this section. The department shall declare the area a
23 rural empowerment zone if upon investigation the department finds that the area meets the
24 requirements of subsection 1 of this section. If the area is found not to meet the requirements,
25 the governing body shall have the opportunity to submit another application for designation as
26 a rural empowerment zone and the department shall designate the area a rural empowerment
27 zone if upon investigation the department finds that the area meets the requirements of
28 subsection 1 of this section.

29 3. There shall be no more than two rural empowerment zones **per county** as created
30 under sections 135.900 to 135.906 in existence at any time.

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