

HB 1660 -- Urban Agriculture Zones

Sponsor: Holsman

This bill allows for the establishment of an urban agriculture zone. In its main provisions, the bill:

(1) Defines an "urban agriculture zone" (UAZ) as a zone that contains an organization or person who grows produce or other agricultural products, raises or processes livestock or poultry, or sells at a minimum 75% locally grown or raised food. The types of UAZs are:

(a) A grower UAZ, which can either grow produce, raise livestock, or produce other value-added agricultural products;

(b) A processing UAZ, which processes livestock or poultry for human consumption; and

(c) A vending UAZ, which sells produce, meat, or value-added agricultural products produced in the UAZ's county or an adjoining county;

(2) Specifies the requirements that each type of UAZ must meet in order to be approved by a municipality;

(3) Allows any person or organization to submit an application and be approved by a municipality of at least 5,000 people to develop a UAZ on a blighted area of land;

(4) Specifies that an application must identify which type or combination of types of UAZs the applicant is applying for and that it meets the appropriate requirements; the number of jobs to be created by the UAZ; the types of products to be produced; and if applying for a vending UAZ, the ability to accept SNAP as a form of payment;

(5) Requires the applicant to provide a plan for at least one educational opportunity per month to be provided by the applicant to local school districts;

(6) Requires the municipality to review approval of the UAZ five and 10 years after the development of the UAZ. After 25 years, the UAZ must dissolve;

(7) Removes the tax assessment on the real property of any UAZ for 10 years once the application requirements have been met. After the 10 years, the UAZ must pay only 50% of the assessed value of the real property for the next 15 years;

(8) Requires a grower UAZ to pay wholesale cost for water consumed on the zone property and pay 50% of the standard cost to hook into the water source;

(9) Transfers the state sales tax revenues, other than the constitutionally dedicated taxes and taxes specifically designated for other uses, from the products sold in a UAZ to the Urban Agricultural Zone Fund created in the bill. The funds will be managed by the State Treasurer. School districts may apply to the State Treasurer for money in the fund to develop gardens on school property; and

(10) Specifies that the provisions of the bill will supersede any local ordinances.