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HOUSE BILL NO. 2227

Offered January 21, 1999

A BILL to amend and reenact § 59.1-274 of the Code of Virginia, relating to designation of enterprise zones.

Patron—Kilgore

Referred to Committee on Counties, Cities and Towns

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 59.1-274 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 59.1-274. Enterprise zone designation.

A. The governing body of any county, city or town may make written application to the Department to have an area or areas declared to be an enterprise zone. Such application shall include a description of the location of the area or areas in question, and a general statement identifying proposed local incentives to complement the state and any federal incentives. Two or more adjacent jurisdictions may file a joint application for an enterprise zone lying in the jurisdictions submitting the application.

B. The Governor may approve upon the recommendation of the Director of the Department of Housing and Community Development the designation of up to ~~five~~ *fifty-five* areas as enterprise zones. *A designation of an area as an enterprise zone shall be for a period of twenty years unless sooner terminated as provided in § 59.1-284.*

C. Any county, city, or town shall be eligible to apply for more than one enterprise zone designation; however, each county, city, and town shall be limited to a total of three enterprise zones.

D. One enterprise zone in any county, city or town may consist of two noncontiguous zone areas. The size of the enterprise zone shall consist of the total of the two noncontiguous zone areas. The two noncontiguous zone areas shall not be considered as separate zones for the purpose of calculating the maximum number of zone designations established by this chapter.

E. Any ~~such~~ *area for which designation as an enterprise zone is sought* shall consist of contiguous United States census tracts or block groups or any part thereof in accordance with the most current United States Census or with the most current data from the Center for Public Service or the local planning district commission.

F. Any ~~such~~ *area seeking for which designation as an enterprise zone is sought* shall also meet at least one of the following criteria: (i) have twenty-five percent or more of the population with incomes below eighty percent of the median income of the jurisdiction, (ii) have an unemployment rate 1.5 times the state average, or (iii) have a demonstrated floor area vacancy rate of industrial and/or commercial properties of twenty percent or more.

G. *Five of the areas designated as enterprise zones on or after July 1, 1999, in addition to satisfying all other applicable conditions, shall be located in:*

1. *A rural area outside the corporate limits of any city or town;*

2. *A county with an unemployment rate that exceeds the statewide unemployment rate by at least fifty percent, based on data for the most recent calendar quarter published by the Virginia Employment Commission;*

3. *A county where the median household income is no more than seventy-five percent of the statewide median household income, based on data for the most recent year released by the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at the University of Virginia; and*

4. *A county where the percentage of people in poverty exceeds the statewide percentage of people in poverty by at least fifty percent, based on data for the most recent year released by the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at the University of Virginia.*

INTRODUCED

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