

House Research Act Summary

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Overview

This article makes a variety of changes to provisions of law affecting economic development.

Section

- 1 **Additional unclassified positions.** Adds Explore Minnesota Tourism to the list of agencies that may designate additional unclassified positions in the state civil service (if the positions meet criteria specified in current law).
- 2 **Franchise.** Modifies the definition of franchise in the context of a franchisee who is authorized to market motor vehicle fuel at retail under the franchisor's trade name. The term franchise does not include the marketing of motor vehicle fuel in circumstances where all the following are present:
 - the franchisor is not a refiner of motor vehicle fuel;
 - the franchisor's trade name or trademark is not used to identify the marketing premises generally;
 - the franchisor does not impose any requirements on nonmotor fuel products or sales; and
 - the facility is not leased from the franchisor.
- 3 **Exempt motor fuel franchises; alternative compliance.** States that a motor fuel franchise

Section

exempt from regulation under section 0 is subject to regulation under chapter 80F (motor vehicle fuel franchises).

- 4 Retail locations and transport vehicles.** Modifies the definition of "transport vehicle," for purposes of petroleum tank release cleanup, to refer to a liquid fuel cargo tank used to deliver gasoline into underground storage tanks during 2002 or 2003 (rather than 2002 and 2003) at a retail location. Extends the deadline for reimbursement from the petroleum tank release cleanup board for the cost of retrofits for retail locations and transport vehicles from January 1, 2006, to September 1, 2006. Makes this section effective retroactively from August 1, 2003.
- 5 Duties (Rural Policy and Development Center).** Requires the Rural Policy and Development Center to submit a legislative report on the status of rural Minnesota by March 1 of each odd-numbered year.
- 6 Partnership program.** Modifies current law allowing up to 25 percent of a job skills partnership board grant to an educational institution to be used for pre-employment training to instead allow "a portion" of such grants to be used for this purpose. Makes this section effective the day following final enactment.
- 7 Pathways program.** Similar to previous section, but for grants for developing programs that assist in the transition of persons from welfare to work and assist individuals at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines. Makes this section effective the day following final enactment.
- 8 Grants (training and retention).** Similar to previous section, but for grants to operate training and retention programs in critical workforce shortages. Makes this section effective the day following final enactment.
- 9 Inland waters.** Clarifies the definition of inland waters for purposes of boiler inspections.
- 10 Assessment and appropriation.** Allows the commissioner of commerce to assess utilities up to an additional \$500,000 through June 30, 2008.
- 11 Expiration.** States that section 0 expires on June 30, 2008.
- 12 Eligibility window.** Broadens the eligibility requirements for receiving renewable energy production incentive (REPI) payments as follows: to be eligible for payments, a qualified hydroelectric facility must be operational and generating electricity by 2009 (as opposed to 2007, as under current law) and a qualified wind energy conversion facility must be operational and generating electricity by 2008 (as opposed to 2007, as under current law).
- 13 Payment period.** Extends the period of eligibility for facilities to receive REPI payments to apply to electricity generated by a qualified hydroelectric facility before 2019 (as opposed to 2017, as under current law) and electricity generated by a qualified wind energy conversion facility before 2018 (as opposed to 2017, as under current law).
- 14 Office of the commissioner of Iron Range resources and rehabilitation.** States that the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board (IRRRB) is a state agency. Clarifies the expenses of the commissioner of Iron Range resources and rehabilitation and allows the commissioner to pay these expenses using IRRRB revenues from the taconite and iron sulphides tax (as is permitted under current law) *and* also using amounts otherwise appropriated to the commissioner by law. Authorizes the commissioner to appoint and compensate the members of advisory task forces. Makes this section effective the day following final enactment.
- 15 Spending priority.** Authorizes the commissioner of Iron Range resources and rehabilitation to lease, for up to 50 years, surface and mineral interests within those portions of the taconite assistance area impacted by the closure of LTV Steel Mining Company. Requires

Section

payments and royalties from such leases to be deposited in the Douglas J. Johnson Economic Protection Trust Fund. Makes this section effective the day following final enactment.

- 16 Budgeting.** Requires the commissioner of Iron Range resources and rehabilitation to annually prepare a budget of operating expenditures, programs, and projects, to be submitted to the IRRRB and the governor for approval. Authorizes the commissioner, after the budget is approved by the board and the governor, to expend available funds approved in the budget for operational expenses, projects, and programs.
- 17 Project approval.** Requires the IRRRB and the commissioner of Iron Range resources and rehabilitation to prepare a list of projects to be funded from the Northeast Minnesota Economic Development Fund by August 1 each year. (Current law requires the board to prepare this list.) Strikes language referring to board proposals of projects. Makes this section effective the day following final enactment.
- 18 Administration.** Modifies references to the "Taconite Environmental Protection Fund" to refer to the "Taconite Area Environmental Protection Fund."
- 19 Appropriation.** Modifies references to the "Taconite Environmental Protection Fund" to refer to the "Taconite Area Environmental Protection Fund." Expands reference to "projects" to include "projects and programs."
- 20 Project approval.** Requires the IRRRB and the commissioner of Iron Range resources and rehabilitation to identify projects to be funded from the Economic Protection Trust Fund. (Current law requires the board to identify these projects.) Strikes language referring to board proposals of projects. Makes this section effective the day following final enactment.
- 21 Long-range plan.** Updates requirements for a long-range plan for the use of the Douglas J. Johnson Economic Protection Trust Fund. Requires the IRRRB and the commissioner of Iron Range resources and rehabilitation to prepare and present a plan to the legislature and the governor by December 31, 2006. Strikes language requiring annual reports from the IRRRB to the legislature and the governor. Makes this section effective the day following final enactment.
- 22 State fair camping area.** Requires the State Agricultural Society to operate a camping area on the State Fairgrounds during the Minnesota Street Rod Association's Back to the 50's event.
- 23 Executive director (PFA).** Provides that the director of the Public Facilities Authority (PFA) serves in the unclassified state civil service.
- 24 Loan repayments (Water Pollution Control Revolving Fund).** Allows municipalities to repay loans over 40 years.
- 25 Bonding authority.** Increases the bonding authority of the PFA from \$1.25 billion to \$1.5 billion to meet future needs. This change would allow the PFA to sell bonds for another 3-5 years, depending on bonding appropriations.
- 26 Duration limit (JOBZ).** Extends by three years the duration of a job opportunity building zone (JOBZ) for certain qualified business that (1) operate an ethanol plant on the JOBZ site including the parcel, and (2) executed a business subsidy agreement after April 30, 2006.
- 27 Fund transfer.** Corrects language used to accomplish a fund transfer in the 2005 Jobs omnibus bill.