

HB 65 -- RURAL EMPOWERMENT ZONE CRITERIA

SPONSOR: Wilson (119)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Rural Community Development by a vote of 12 to 0.

Currently, rural empowerment zones are only allowed to exist in Hickory County, which has a population of 8,940 residents. This bill allows these zones to exist in any county with 18,000 or fewer residents, which includes 56 counties. The bill also prohibits more than two rural empowerment zones in any county.

FISCAL NOTE: Estimated Cost to General Revenue Fund of \$0 to Unknown - could exceed \$6,600,000 in FY 2010, FY 2011, and FY 2012. No impact on Other State Funds in FY 2010, FY 2011, and FY 2012.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that it is very difficult for rural communities to encourage new businesses to locate in their area. The bill will provide a powerful incentive that may reverse the negative economic growth experienced in rural Missouri.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Wilson (119); Associated Industries of Missouri; and Taxpayers Research Institute of Missouri.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.