

HCS HB 840 -- AEROTROPOLIS TRADE INCENTIVE AND TAX CREDIT ACT

SPONSOR: Zerr (Jones, 117)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Economic Development by a vote of 21 to 0.

This substitute establishes the Aerotropolis Trade Incentive and Tax Credit Act to encourage foreign trade by authorizing the Mayor of the City of St. Louis or the executive officer of certain counties to designate a gateway zone in a foreign trade zone or a specified site within 50 miles of Lambert-St. Louis International Airport, an area within the airport boundaries, or any area owned or managed by the City of St. Louis Port Authority by notifying the Department of Economic Development of the designation. Certain economic incentives will be available in a gateway zone for freight forwarders and owners of, tenants in, and entities operating within eligible facilities.

For all taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2011, tax credits are authorized for freight forwarders against income taxes with the exception of withholding taxes; corporate franchise taxes; and financial institution taxes. For all taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2013, an exemption from income and corporate franchise taxes and the retention of taxes otherwise withheld from employees' wages is authorized for any tenant or entity operating within an eligible facility. For all taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2013, tax credits are authorized for owners of qualified facilities against income taxes with the exception of withholding taxes; corporate franchise taxes; and financial institution taxes.

The substitute specifies the requirements for freight forwarders and owners of, tenants in, and entities operating within eligible facilities to receive benefits and how the benefits will be calculated.

The tax credits for freight forwarders and owners of eligible facilities are capped per fiscal year as specified in the substitute. Tax credits that are authorized but not issued due to the annual caps can be carried forward to the next year. Tax credits that are authorized before the provisions of the substitute expire will continue to be issued during the eligibility period. An authorized tax credit that exceeds an applicant's tax liability for a year may be carried forward for six years, transferred, sold, or assigned.

The City of St. Louis and any county with a designated gateway zone must establish a board of supervisors that will annually levy special assessments on eligible facilities located within

the gateway zone that receive benefits provided under the provisions of the substitute. Revenues derived from the special assessments must be used to market and promote the gateway zone and defined cargo activities of the airport.

The provisions of the substitute will expire six years from the effective date.

FISCAL NOTE: Estimated Net Cost on General Revenue Fund of Unknown greater than \$3,755,364 in FY 2012, Unknown greater than \$13,366,761 in FY 2013, and Unknown greater than \$23,568,587 in FY 2014. No impact on Other State Funds in FY 2012, FY 2013, and FY 2014.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill is essential to create an international marketplace in Missouri and a demand for our products internationally. Lambert-St. Louis International Airport is not being fully utilized and is capable of becoming a hub for international trade routes. The amount of economic activity generated by these trade routes will be immense.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Jones (117); Senator Schmitt; Lambert-St. Louis Airport Authority; Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry; St. Louis RCGA; Missouri AFL-CIO; St. Louis Building and Construction Trades Council; St. Louis County Economic Council; and Bud Gruchalla.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.