

Present constitution authorizes the State Board of Commerce and Industry (the board), or its successor, subject to the approval of the governor and the local governing authority, to enter into contracts granting to a property owner who proposes the expansion, restoration, improvement, or development of an existing structure or structures in a downtown, historic, or economic development district the right for an initial term of five years after completion of the work to pay ad valorem taxes based upon the assessed valuation of the property for the year prior to the commencement of the expansion, restoration, improvement, or development. Such contracts may be renewed, subject to the same conditions, for an additional five years extending the right for a total of 10 years from completion of the work.

Proposed constitutional amendment retains present constitution and authorizes the board to enter into contracts granting to a property owner who proposes the expansion, restoration, improvement, or redevelopment of an existing residential structure or structures in Orleans Parish that are at least 40 years old and certified as a blighted property in the manner provided by Act No. 155 of the 1984 Regular Session the right for five years after completion of the work and after the structure has passed fire and safety inspections to pay ad valorem taxes based upon the assessed valuation of the property for the year prior to the commencement of the expansion, restoration, improvement, or redevelopment. Act No. 155 of the 1984 R.S. provides that "blighted property" includes those premises declared vacant, uninhabitable, and hazardous by the Dept. of Safety and Permits of the City of New Orleans.

Proposed constitutional amendment requires the structure to remain residential property for the contract to remain in force for the entire term and provides that the contract shall not take effect until the property subject to the exemption is put into its intended use and passes final safety and fire inspections.

Provides for submission of the proposed amendment to the voters at the gubernatorial primary election in 1999.

(Amends Const. Art. VII, §21(H))