

2020 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 79

BY REPRESENTATIVE BISHOP

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request that changes to the eligibility requirements for participation in the Enterprise Zone incentive to extend eligibility to restaurants and hotels be included in any proclamation convening an extraordinary session of the legislature in 2020.

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, Governor John Bel Edwards invoked his authority under the Louisiana Health Emergency Powers Act, R.S. 29:760 et seq., to issue Emergency Proclamation Number 25 JBE 2020, which declared a statewide public health emergency as a result of the imminent threat posed to Louisiana citizens by the outbreak of a respiratory disease caused by the novel coronavirus known as COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the governor issued Emergency Proclamation Number 27 JBE 2020, which supplemented the measures taken in Emergency Proclamation Number 25 JBE 2020 with additional restrictions to further protect the health and safety of the public and expressly provided for "'emergency-related claims'. . . for unemployment compensation filed by persons whose unemployment is directly due to the impact of COVID-19 or due to their inability to get to their job or worksite because they are sick, isolated or quarantined, caring for a sick family member, or when an employee's child's school is closed as determined by the administrator of the state's unemployment compensation program"; and

WHEREAS, on March 22, 2020, the governor issued Emergency Proclamation Number 33 JBE 2020 which implemented a general stay-at-home order to the public and additional measures including the temporary closure of certain businesses, further limiting the operations of certain non-essential businesses to the public in an effort to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 and to disrupt the spread of the virus; and

WHEREAS, these businesses have experienced serious hardship and financial disruption due to COVID-19 impacts on their operations and workforces; and

WHEREAS, the ability of these businesses to expeditiously return to their previous levels of operation is critical to Louisiana's economy, as well as state and local government revenues; and

WHEREAS, the Enterprise Zone incentive is designed to encourage and promote private sector investment and local economic development efforts in depressed areas of the state by establishing tax rebates and tax credits for businesses that are located in areas that meet enterprise zone criteria including high unemployment rates, lower per capita income, and a resident population that receives public assistance; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, state law was amended to limit eligibility for certain retail businesses to participate in these incentives to grocery stores and pharmacies that have more than one hundred employees nationwide; and

WHEREAS, the legislature should consider legislation, during any extraordinary session that may be called in 2020, to amend the eligibility criteria for participation in the Enterprise Zone incentive to include restaurants and hotels which have suffered great economic losses as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request that changes to the eligibility requirements for participation in the Enterprise Zone incentive to extend eligibility to restaurants and hotels be included in any proclamation convening an extraordinary session of the legislature in 2020.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the governor of the state of Louisiana, the speaker of the House of Representatives, and the president of the Senate.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE