

COMMITTEE OF ORIGIN: Standing Committee on Economic Development

This bill provides that if a port authority created as a political subdivision purchases or leases real property located within an adjoining municipality or state, such real property is deemed included within the port district and the port authority can exercise its powers there.

The bill permits every approved local and regional port authority to acquire, own, lease, sell, mortgage, encumber, or otherwise dispose of interest in real property in adjoining municipalities and states; to create and operate agencies and departments as necessary; establish port rangers; contract with other port authorities; and to perform other acts as necessary.

The bill prohibits state funds allocated to port authorities from being used to fund housing projects using the Housing Authorities Law. The bill allows a department or office receiving an appropriation of state funds for a project to be undertaken by a port authority to, by agreement, advance the designated funds to the port authority in that fiscal year in lieu of providing the funds on a reimbursement basis. The port authority will be required to repay the funds in the event it violates the requirements of the agreement. In lieu of designating moneys to the port authority, the department or office of the State are also allowed to designate moneys with a financial institution or escrow agent to be held and disbursed, subject to the terms of an agreement.

This bill allows commissioners of port authorities to serve until a successor has been appointed. In the event the county or city that creates the port authority operates under a charter form of government, the method of appointment, required qualifications, salaries, and powers, must be provided in the charter.

The bill permits a board of port authority commissioners to determine the qualifications, salaries, powers, and duties of the board in its bylaws if the governing body of the county or municipality that created the port authority fails to do so.

The bill specifies the method for removing a member of a board of port authority commissioners.

This bill authorizes port authorities to use additional procurement methods authorized by state law.

Currently, any expenditure by a port authority over \$25,000 must be competitively bid. This bill raises that amount to \$75,000. The bill also requires newspaper notification of these bids no fewer than 20 days prior to awarding the contract.

The bill modifies the definition of "new job" as currently defined in the Advanced Industrial Manufacturing Zones Act (AIM Zone) and specifies that only jobs created after to the date of the establishment of the AIM zone can be considered new jobs, with the exception of certain jobs determined by the Missouri Department of Economic Development.

This bill allows records and documents submitted to a port authority pertaining to a business prospect the authority is negotiating to be considered closed records for the purposes of public disclosure law.

The bill establishes the "Waterways and Ports Trust Fund" in the state treasury. Moneys in the fund must be withdrawn only at the request of a Missouri port authority for specified purposes. The bill modifies the eligibility criteria to receive an appropriation from the fund.

Under current law, "consent" is considered the written acknowledgment and approval of the creation of a district by the owners of real property collectively owning more than 60% of the assessed value of the real property within the boundaries of the proposed district, and more than 60% per capita of the owners of property within those boundaries. This bill lowers 60% to 50% in both instances.

The bill exempts consideration of a petition by the circuit court if the port authority is the owner of all real property within the district for which a change has been proposed or if 100% of the owners of all real property within the district have consented in writing to the project.