

STATE OF FLORIDA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER 13-151

WHEREAS, although economic progress has been made in many rural areas, the growth and prosperity enjoyed by many communities in the State during the past 45 years has not extended into all of Florida's rural areas; and

WHEREAS, these communities are stewards of the vast majority of Florida's land and natural resources, upon which the State's continued growth and prosperity depend; and

WHEREAS, successful rural communities are essential to the overall success of the State's economy and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, certain rural communities are struggling to maintain, support or enhance job creating activities or to generate revenues for education and other critical government services such as infrastructure, transportation and safety; and

WHEREAS, the challenges faced by these rural communities threaten their well-being and viability; and

WHEREAS, section 288.0656 (7), Florida Statutes, authorizes the Rural Economic Development Initiative to recommend to the Governor up to three areas for designation as rural areas of critical economic concern; and

WHEREAS, a rural area of critical economic concern is comprised of rural communities designated by the Governor that has been adversely affected by an extraordinary economic event, severe or chronic distress, or a natural disaster or that presents a unique economic development opportunity of regional impact; and

WHEREAS, the Counties of Baker, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Putnam, Suwannee, Taylor, and Union were designated on April 23, 2003, by Executive Order 03-74, as a Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern for a term of five years; and

WHEREAS, the designation expired on April 23, 2008, and the Rural Economic Development Initiative met on April 18, 2008, and agreed to recommend the Governor continue the designation of the counties of Baker, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Putnam, Suwannee, Taylor and Union as a Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern; and

WHEREAS, The counties of Baker, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Putnam, Suwannee, Taylor and Union were re-designated on June 11, 2008, by Executive Order 08-132, as a Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern for a period of five years; and

WHEREAS, the re-designation will expire on June 11, 2013, and the Rural Economic Development Initiative met on April 26, 2013 and agreed to recommend the Governor continue the designation of the counties of Baker, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Putnam, Suwannee, Taylor and Union as a Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RICK SCOTT, as Governor of Florida, by virtue of the authority vested in me by Article IV, Section 1(a), Florida Constitution, and Section 288.0656 (7), Florida Statutes, do hereby issue the following Executive Order, effective immediately:

Section 1.

The area within the boundaries of the Counties of Baker, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Putnam, Suwannee, Taylor, and Union is designated as a Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern.

Section 2.

This area shall be a priority assignment for the Rural Economic Development Initiative.

Section 3.

On a case-by-case basis, the criteria, requirements or similar provisions of economic development incentives may be waived. Such incentives include, but shall not be limited to, the Qualified Target Industry Tax Refund Program under section 288.106, Florida Statutes, the Quick Response Training Program under section 288.047, Florida Statutes, the Quick Response Training Program for participants in the Welfare Transition Program under section 288.047(8), Florida Statutes, Economic Development Transportation projects under section 339.2821, Florida Statutes, the Brownfield Redevelopment Bonus Refund under section 288.107, Florida Statutes, and the Rural Job Tax Credit Program under sections 212.098 and 220.1895, Florida Statutes.

Section 4.

Access to the assistance available under this Designation as a Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern shall be contingent upon the execution of memoranda of agreement between the Department of Economic Opportunity, the governing bodies of the counties, and the governing bodies of the municipalities included within the area. Such memoranda of agreement shall specify the terms and conditions of the designation, including, but not limited to, the duties and responsibilities of the counties and municipalities to take actions designed to facilitate the retention

and expansion of existing businesses in the area, the recruitment of new businesses to the area, as well as to improve the economic viability in the area.

Section 5.

This designation shall be in effect for five years and will expire on June 12th, 2018. The Rural Economic Development Initiative may recommend the designation be terminated or continued based on economic development progress from current base lines or upon performance under the memoranda of agreement.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Florida to be affixed at Tallahassee, this 12th day of June, 2013.



RICK SCOTT, GOVERNOR

ATTEST:

SECRETARY OF STATE

FILED
2013 JUN 12 AM 9:04
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

Rick Scott
GOVERNOR



Jesse Panuccio
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

May 21, 2013

**North Central Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern (RACEC)
Recommendation for Re-designation of the Area**

RECOMMENDATION:

Pursuant to s. 288.0656 (7)(a), F.S., the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) has recommended that the Governor re-designate the counties of Baker, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Putnam, Suwannee, Taylor, and Union as the North Central Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern (RACEC).

DEO concurs with REDI's recommendation and supports the re-designation. Pursuant to s. 288.0656(7)(a), F.S., the Governor may re-designate the North Central RACEC by executive order.

A draft executive order is attached.

Approval: Jesse Panuccio _____

Yes

_____ Yes, with changes

Approval: Governor Rick Scott _____

Yes

_____ Yes, with changes

Please return to Sherri Martin, (850) 717-8520

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