

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
77R3718 JMG-F

S.B. 746  
By: Staples  
Natural Resources  
3/2/2001  
As Filed

### **DIGEST AND PURPOSE**

Currently, the Department of Agriculture (department) has the ability to conduct rural economic development initiatives based on authority allowed by Article 6, Rider 14, of the General Appropriations Act. The rider directed the department to develop a memorandum of understanding with the Texas Department of Economic Development for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a statewide economic development program for rural areas. S.B. 746 places this authority in statute.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Department of Agriculture in SECTION 2 of this bill.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 12, Agricultural Code, by adding Section 12.027, as follows:

Sec. 12.027. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. (a) Requires the Department of Agriculture (department) to maintain an economic development program (program) for rural areas in this state.

(b) Requires the department, in administering the program, to:

- (1) promote economic growth in rural areas;
- (2) identify potential opportunities for business in rural areas and assist rural communities in maximizing those opportunities;
- (3) work with rural communities to identify economic development needs and direct those communities to persons who can address and assist in meeting those needs;
- (4) encourage communication between organizations, industries, and regions to improve economic and community development services to rural areas;
- (5) coordinate meetings with public and private entities to distribute information beneficial to rural areas;
- (6) enter into a memorandum of agreement to work cooperatively with the Texas Department of Economic Development, the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, and other entities the department deems appropriate to further program objectives; and
- (7) perform any other functions necessary to carry out the program.

(c) Authorizes the department to employ personnel to carry out the program.

SECTION 2. (a) Effective date: September 1, 2001.

(b) Requires the department to adopt rules for the administration of Section 12.027, Agriculture Code, as added by this Act, before December 1, 2001.

(c) Requires the department to enter into the memorandum of agreement required by Section 12.027(b)(6), Agriculture Code, as added by this Act, before December 1, 2001.