

RESOLUTION 2014-17

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF PORT ST. JOE , FLORIDA, EXPRESSING ITS SUPPORT THAT THE DESIGNATION OF RURAL AREA OF OPPORTUNITY (RAO), FORMERLY KNOWN AS RURAL AREA OF CRITICAL ECONOMIC CONCERN (RACEC) CONTINUE TO APPLY TO THE NORTHWEST FLORIDA REGION INCORPORATING CALHOUN, FRANKLIN, GADSDEN, GULF, HOLMES, JACKSON, LIBERTY, WAKULLA, WASHINGTON AND THE CITY OF FREEPORT (INCLUDING THE CITIES, TOWNS AND COMMUNITIES WITHIN EACH); AND, THAT ALL ENTERPRISE ZONES IN THESE COUNTIES AND COMMUNITIES CONTINUE TO EXIST; AND THE CONTINUATION OF ALL STAFFING GRANT FUNDING FOR THE NORTHWEST FLORIDA BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, INCORPORATED, D/B/A OPPORTUNITY FLORIDA, THROUGH FUNDS APPROPRIATED BY THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE AND ADMINISTERED THROUGH FLORIDA'S DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE NO LATER THAN JANUARY 8, 2015.

WHEREAS, in 1999 Governor Bush, by executive order, identified eight counties (Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Liberty and Washington) as Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern, and that this designation was renewed in 2004 and added the area within the city limits of Freeport to this designation;

WHEREAS, in 2000 Opportunity Florida was created to promote and improve economic development in the eight counties designated as Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern;

WHEREAS, the counties of Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Liberty, Washington and the area within the city limits of Freeport were re-designated in 2009, as a Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern for a period of five years;

WHEREAS, Executive Order 11-103 added Wakulla County to the Northwest Florida Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern:

WHEREAS, the various counties and municipalities in the Opportunity Florida region request that Governor Rick Scott renew the designation as a Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern;

WHEREAS, the Northwest Florida Business Development Council, Inc., in cooperation with and through the support of the nine counties, all municipalities within the nine counties, the city of Freeport, all CareerSource Centers serving

the region and corporate sector partners, has made great strides in improving the economic outlook for the Northwest Florida RACEC by assisting with recruiting new industries, supporting infrastructure projects and working together with local communities and other organizations such as the Department of Economic Opportunity and Enterprise Florida, FDOT and the Governor's Office; and

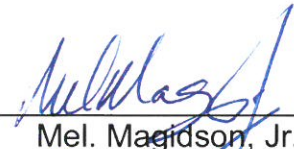
WHEREAS, notwithstanding the progress that has been made since 2009, there is still much work that needs to be done to help these nine counties compete economically with other parts of the state;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Port St. Joe City Commission does hereby express its support of the following:

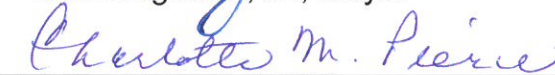
1. That the designation "Rural Area of Opportunity," formerly referred to as "Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern," continue to apply to Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Liberty, Wakulla and Washington counties and the city of Freeport;
2. That all existing Enterprise Zones in these counties continue to exist;
3. That all staffing grant funding for Opportunity Florida be continued and expanded for the Northwest Florida Business Development Council, Inc. through funds appropriated by the Florida Legislature and administered through Florida's Department of Economic Opportunity, Enterprise Florida, Inc., and other designated agencies.

Duly adopted this 5th day of November, 2014.

Port St. Joe City Commission



Mel. Magidson, Jr., Mayor



Charlotte Pierce, City Clerk