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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2020

A N A C T

RELATING TO TAXATION - PROPERTY SUBJECT TO TAXATION

Introduced By: Representatives Speakman, Knight, Donovan, and Cassar

Date Introduced: February 05, 2020

Referred To: House Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 44-3-9 of the General Laws in Chapter 44-3 entitled "Property
2 Subject to Taxation" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **44-3-9. Exemption or stabilizing of taxes on property used for manufacturing,**
4 **commercial, or residential purposes.**

5 (a)(1) Except as provided in this section, the electors of any city or town qualified to vote
6 on a proposition to appropriate money or impose a tax when legally assembled, may vote to
7 authorize the city or town council, for a period not exceeding twenty (20) years, and subject to the
8 conditions as provided in this section, to exempt from payment, in whole or in part, real and
9 personal property which has undergone environmental remediation, is historically preserved, or is
10 used for affordable housing, manufacturing, commercial, or residential purposes, or to determine
11 a stabilized amount of taxes to be paid on account of the property, notwithstanding the valuation
12 of the property or the rate of tax; provided, that after public hearings, at least ten (10) days' notice
13 of which shall be given in a newspaper having a general circulation in the city or town, the city or
14 town council determines that:

15 (i) Granting of the exemption or stabilization will inure to the benefit of the city or town
16 by reason of:

17 (A) The willingness of the manufacturing or commercial concern to locate in the city or
18 town, or of individuals to reside in such an area; or

19 (B) The willingness of a manufacturing firm to expand facilities with an increase in

1 employment or the willingness of a commercial or manufacturing concern to retain or expand its
2 facility in the city or town and not substantially reduce its work force in the city or town; or

3 (C) An improvement of the physical plant of the city or town which will result in a long-
4 term economic benefit to the city or town and state; or

5 (D) An improvement which converts or makes available land or facility that would
6 otherwise be not developable or difficult to develop without substantial environmental
7 remediation; or

8 (ii) Granting of the exemption or stabilization of taxes will inure to the benefit of the city
9 or town by reason of the willingness of a manufacturing or commercial or residential firm or
10 property owner to construct new or to replace, reconstruct, convert, expand, retain or remodel
11 existing buildings, facilities, machinery, or equipment with modern buildings, facilities, fixtures,
12 machinery, or equipment resulting in an increase or maintenance in plant, residential housing or
13 commercial building investment by the firm or property owned in the city or town;

14 (2) Provided that should the city or town council make the determination in subparagraph
15 (1)(i)(B) of this subsection, any exemption or stabilization may be granted as to new buildings,
16 fixtures, machinery, or equipment for new buildings, firms or expansions, and may be granted as
17 to existing buildings, fixtures, machinery and equipment for existing employers in the city or
18 town.

19 (b) Cities shall have the same authority as is granted to towns except that authority
20 granted to the qualified electors of a town and to town councils shall be exercised in the case of a
21 city by the city council.

22 (c) For purposes of this section, "property used for commercial purposes" means any
23 building or structures used essentially for offices or commercial enterprises.

24 (d) Except as provided in this section, property, the payment of taxes on which has been
25 so exempted or which is subject to the payment of a stabilized amount of taxes, shall not, during
26 the period for which the exemption or stabilization of the amount of taxes is granted, be further
27 liable to taxation by the city or town in which the property is located so long as the property is
28 used for the manufacturing or commercial, or residential purposes for which the exemption or
29 stabilized amount of taxes was made.

30 (e) Notwithstanding any vote of the qualified electors of a town and findings of a town
31 council or of any vote and findings by a city council, the property shall be assessed for and shall
32 pay that portion of the tax, if any, assessed by the city or town in which the real or personal
33 property is located, for the purpose of paying the indebtedness of the city or town and the
34 indebtedness of the state or any political subdivision of the state to the extent assessed upon or

1 apportioned to the city or town, and the interest on the indebtedness, and for appropriation to any
2 sinking fund of the city or town, which portion of the tax shall be paid in full, and the taxes so
3 assessed and collected shall be kept in a separate account and used only for that purpose.

4 (f) Nothing in this section shall be deemed to permit the exemption or stabilization
5 provided in this section for any manufacturing or commercial concern relocating from one city or
6 town within the state of Rhode Island to another; provided, however, that a manufacturing or
7 commercial concern may, upon a form prescribed by the commerce corporation, apply to the
8 commerce corporation, in conjunction with the municipality in which it seeks to relocate, for a
9 determination that:

10 (1) The manufacturing or commercial concern could reasonably and efficiently relocate
11 outside the state of Rhode Island; and

12 (2) Relocating outside the state of Rhode island would be economically advantageous and
13 beneficial to the company.

14 The application shall include a copy of any proposed agreement with the municipality to
15 which it seeks to relocate and a statement outlining the benefits the company could receive if it
16 were to relocate outside the state of Rhode Island. If the commerce corporation, upon review of
17 the application finds that the manufacturing or commercial concern would benefit from relocating
18 outside the state of Rhode Island, it may permit the exemption or stabilization of taxes in another
19 municipality within this state.

20 (g) Renewable energy resources, as defined in § 39-26-5, qualify for tax stabilization
21 agreements pursuant to § 44-3-9(a).

22 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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1 This act would permit a manufacturing or commercial concern located in this state to
2 apply to the commerce corporation, for an exemption or stabilization of taxes, when moving to
3 another municipality within this state if it can show that it could reasonably and efficiently
4 relocate outside the state and that such relocation would be economically advantageous.

5 This act would take effect upon passage.

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