

122.17 Grants to foster job creation.

(A) As used in this section:

(1) "Full-time employee" means an individual who is employed for consideration for at least an average of thirty-five hours a week, who renders any other standard of service generally accepted by custom or specified by contract as full-time employment, or who is employed for consideration for such time or renders such service but is on family or medical leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, Pub. L. No. 103-3, 107 Stat. 6, as amended, or on active duty reserve or Ohio national guard service.

(2) "New employee" means one of the following:

(a) A full-time employee first employed by a taxpayer in the project that is the subject of the agreement after the taxpayer enters into a tax credit agreement with the tax credit authority under this section;

(b) A full-time employee first employed by a taxpayer in the project that is the subject of the tax credit after the tax credit authority approves a project for a tax credit under this section in a public meeting, as long as the taxpayer enters into the tax credit agreement prepared by the department of development after such meeting within sixty days after receiving the agreement from the department. If the taxpayer fails to enter into the agreement within sixty days, "new employee" has the same meaning as under division (A)(2)(a) of this section. A full-time employee may be considered a "new employee" of a taxpayer, despite previously having been employed by a related member of the taxpayer, if all of the following apply:

(i) The related member is a party to the tax credit agreement at the time the employee is first employed with the taxpayer;

(ii) The related member will remain subject to the tax imposed by section 5725.18, 5729.03, 5733.06, or 5747.02 or levied under Chapter 5751. of the Revised Code for the remainder of the term of the tax credit, and the tax credit is taken against liability for that same tax through the remainder of the term of the tax credit; and

(iii) The employee was considered a new employee of the related member prior to employment with the taxpayer.

Under division (A)(2)(a) or (b) of this section, if the tax credit authority determines it appropriate, "new employee" also may include an employee re-hired or called back from lay-off to work in a new facility or on a new product or service established or produced by the taxpayer after entering into the agreement under this section or after the tax credit authority approves the tax credit in a public meeting. Except as otherwise provided in this paragraph, "new employee" does not include any employee of the taxpayer who was previously employed in this state by a related member of the taxpayer and whose employment was shifted to the taxpayer after the taxpayer entered into the tax credit agreement or after the tax credit authority approved the credit in a public meeting, or any employee of the taxpayer for which the taxpayer has been granted a certificate under division (B) of section 5709.66 of the Revised Code. However, if the taxpayer is engaged in the enrichment and commercialization of uranium or uranium products or is engaged in research and development activities related thereto and if the tax credit authority determines it appropriate, "new employee" may include an employee of the taxpayer who was previously employed in this state by a related member of the taxpayer

and whose employment was shifted to the taxpayer after the taxpayer entered into the tax credit agreement or after the tax credit authority approved the credit in a public meeting. "New employee" does not include an employee of the taxpayer who is employed in an employment position that was relocated to a project from other operations of the taxpayer in this state or from operations of a related member of the taxpayer in this state. In addition, "new employee" does not include a child, grandchild, parent, or spouse, other than a spouse who is legally separated from the individual, of any individual who is an employee of the taxpayer and who has a direct or indirect ownership interest of at least five per cent in the profits, capital, or value of the taxpayer. Such ownership interest shall be determined in accordance with section 1563 of the Internal Revenue Code and regulations prescribed thereunder.

(3) "New income tax revenue" means the total amount withheld under section 5747.06 of the Revised Code by the taxpayer during the taxable year, or during the calendar year that includes the tax period, from the compensation of new employees for the tax levied under Chapter 5747. of the Revised Code.

(4) "Related member" has the same meaning as under division (A)(6) of section 5733.042 of the Revised Code without regard to division (B) of that section.

(B) The tax credit authority may make grants under this section to foster job creation in this state. Such a grant shall take the form of a refundable credit allowed against the tax imposed by section 5725.18, 5729.03, 5733.06, or 5747.02 or levied under Chapter 5751. of the Revised Code. The credit shall be claimed for the taxable years or tax periods specified in the taxpayer's agreement with the tax credit authority under division (D) of this section. With respect to taxes imposed under section 5733.06 or 5747.02 or Chapter 5751. of the Revised Code, the credit shall be claimed in the order required under section 5733.98, 5747.98, or 5751.98 of the Revised Code. The amount of the credit available for a taxable year or for a calendar year that includes a tax period equals the new income tax revenue for that year multiplied by the percentage specified in the agreement with the tax credit authority. Any credit granted under this section against the tax imposed by section 5733.06 or 5747.02 of the Revised Code, to the extent not fully utilized against such tax for taxable years ending prior to 2008, shall automatically be converted without any action taken by the tax credit authority to a credit against the tax levied under Chapter 5751. of the Revised Code for tax periods beginning on or after July 1, 2008, provided that the person to whom the credit was granted is subject to such tax. The converted credit shall apply to those calendar years in which the remaining taxable years specified in the agreement end.

(C) A taxpayer or potential taxpayer who proposes a project to create new jobs in this state may apply to the tax credit authority to enter into an agreement for a tax credit under this section. The director of development shall prescribe the form of the application. After receipt of an application, the authority may enter into an agreement with the taxpayer for a credit under this section if it determines all of the following:

(1) The taxpayer's project will create new jobs in this state;

(2) The taxpayer's project is economically sound and will benefit the people of this state by increasing opportunities for employment and strengthening the economy of this state;

(3) Receiving the tax credit is a major factor in the taxpayer's decision to go forward with the project.

(D) An agreement under this section shall include all of the following:

- (1) A detailed description of the project that is the subject of the agreement;
- (2) The term of the tax credit, which shall not exceed fifteen years, and the first taxable year, or first calendar year that includes a tax period, for which the credit may be claimed;
- (3) A requirement that the taxpayer shall maintain operations at the project location for at least twice the number of years as the term of the tax credit;
- (4) The percentage, as determined by the tax credit authority, of new income tax revenue that will be allowed as the amount of the credit for each taxable year or for each calendar year that includes a tax period;
- (5) A specific method for determining how many new employees are employed during a taxable year or during a calendar year that includes a tax period;
- (6) A requirement that the taxpayer annually shall report to the director of development the number of new employees, the new income tax revenue withheld in connection with the new employees, and any other information the director needs to perform the director's duties under this section;
- (7) A requirement that the director of development annually shall verify the amounts reported under division (D)(6) of this section, and after doing so shall issue a certificate to the taxpayer stating that the amounts have been verified;
- (8)(a) A provision requiring that the taxpayer, except as otherwise provided in division (D)(8)(b) of this section, shall not relocate employment positions from elsewhere in this state to the project site that is the subject of the agreement for the lesser of five years from the date the agreement is entered into or the number of years the taxpayer is entitled to claim the tax credit.
 - (b) The taxpayer may relocate employment positions from elsewhere in this state to the project site that is the subject of the agreement if the director of development determines both of the following:
 - (i) That the site from which the employment positions would be relocated is inadequate to meet market and industry conditions, expansion plans, consolidation plans, or other business considerations affecting the taxpayer;
 - (ii) That the legislative authority of the county, township, or municipal corporation from which the employment positions would be relocated has been notified of the relocation.

For purposes of this section, the movement of an employment position from one political subdivision to another political subdivision shall be considered a relocation of an employment position, but the transfer of an individual employee from one political subdivision to another political subdivision shall not be considered a relocation of an employment position as long as the individual's employment position in the first political subdivision is refilled.

(E) If a taxpayer fails to meet or comply with any condition or requirement set forth in a tax credit agreement, the tax credit authority may amend the agreement to reduce the percentage or term of the tax credit. The reduction of the percentage or term shall take effect (1) in the taxable year immediately following the taxable year in which the

authority amends the agreement or the director of development notifies the taxpayer in writing of such failure, or (2) in the first tax period beginning in the calendar year immediately following the calendar year in which the authority amends the agreement or the director notifies the taxpayer in writing of such failure. If the taxpayer fails to annually report any of the information required by division (D)(6) of this section within the time required by the director, the reduction of the percentage or term may take effect in the current taxable year. If the taxpayer relocates employment positions in violation of the provision required under division (D)(8)(a) of this section, the taxpayer shall not claim the tax credit under section 5733.0610 of the Revised Code for any tax years following the calendar year in which the relocation occurs, or shall not claim the tax credit under section 5725.32, 5729.032, or 5747.058 of the Revised Code for the taxable year in which the relocation occurs and any subsequent taxable years, and shall not claim the tax credit under division (A) of section 5751.50 of the Revised Code for any tax period in the calendar year in which the relocation occurs and any subsequent tax periods.

(F) Projects that consist solely of point-of-final-purchase retail facilities are not eligible for a tax credit under this section. If a project consists of both point-of-final-purchase retail facilities and nonretail facilities, only the portion of the project consisting of the nonretail facilities is eligible for a tax credit and only the new income tax revenue from new employees of the nonretail facilities shall be considered when computing the amount of the tax credit. If a warehouse facility is part of a point-of-final-purchase retail facility and supplies only that facility, the warehouse facility is not eligible for a tax credit. Catalog distribution centers are not considered point-of-final-purchase retail facilities for the purposes of this division, and are eligible for tax credits under this section.

(G) Financial statements and other information submitted to the department of development or the tax credit authority by an applicant or recipient of a tax credit under this section, and any information taken for any purpose from such statements or information, are not public records subject to section 149.43 of the Revised Code. However, the chairperson of the authority may make use of the statements and other information for purposes of issuing public reports or in connection with court proceedings concerning tax credit agreements under this section. Upon the request of the tax commissioner or, if the applicant or recipient is an insurance company, upon the request of the superintendent of insurance, the chairperson of the authority shall provide to the commissioner or superintendent any statement or information submitted by an applicant or recipient of a tax credit in connection with the credit. The commissioner or superintendent shall preserve the confidentiality of the statement or information.

(H) A taxpayer claiming a credit under this section shall submit to the tax commissioner or, if the taxpayer is an insurance company, to the superintendent of insurance, a copy of the director of development's certificate of verification under division (D)(7) of this section with the taxpayer's tax report or return for the taxable year or for the calendar year that includes the tax period. Failure to submit a copy of the certificate with the report or return does not invalidate a claim for a credit if the taxpayer submits a copy of the certificate to the commissioner or superintendent within sixty days after the commissioner or superintendent requests it.

(I) The director of development, after consultation with the tax commissioner and the superintendent of insurance and in accordance with Chapter 119. of the Revised Code, shall adopt rules necessary to implement this section. The rules may provide for recipients of tax credits under this section to be charged fees to cover administrative costs of the tax credit program. The fees collected shall be credited to the tax incentive programs operating fund created in section 122.174 of the Revised Code. At the time the director gives public notice under division (A) of section 119.03 of the Revised Code of

the adoption of the rules, the director shall submit copies of the proposed rules to the chairpersons of the standing committees on economic development in the senate and the house of representatives.

(J) For the purposes of this section, a taxpayer may include a partnership, a corporation that has made an election under subchapter S of chapter one of subtitle A of the Internal Revenue Code, or any other business entity through which income flows as a distributive share to its owners. A partnership, S-corporation, or other such business entity may elect to pass the credit received under this section through to the persons to whom the income or profit of the partnership, S-corporation, or other entity is distributed. The election shall be made on the annual report required under division (D)(6) of this section. The election applies to and is irrevocable for the credit for which the report is submitted. If the election is made, the credit shall be apportioned among those persons in the same proportions as those in which the income or profit is distributed.

(K) If the director of development determines that a taxpayer who has received a credit under this section is not complying with the requirement under division (D)(3) of this section, the director shall notify the tax credit authority of the noncompliance. After receiving such a notice, and after giving the taxpayer an opportunity to explain the noncompliance, the tax credit authority may require the taxpayer to refund to this state a portion of the credit in accordance with the following:

(1) If the taxpayer maintained operations at the project location for at least one and one-half times the number of years of the term of the tax credit, an amount not exceeding twenty-five per cent of the sum of any previously allowed credits under this section;

(2) If the taxpayer maintained operations at the project location for at least the number of years of the term of the tax credit, an amount not exceeding fifty per cent of the sum of any previously allowed credits under this section;

(3) If the taxpayer maintained operations at the project location for less than the number of years of the term of the tax credit, an amount not exceeding one hundred per cent of the sum of any previously allowed credits under this section.

In determining the portion of the tax credit to be refunded to this state, the tax credit authority shall consider the effect of market conditions on the taxpayer's project and whether the taxpayer continues to maintain other operations in this state. After making the determination, the authority shall certify the amount to be refunded to the tax commissioner or superintendent of insurance, as appropriate. If the amount is certified to the commissioner, the commissioner shall make an assessment for that amount against the taxpayer under Chapter 5733., 5747., or 5751. of the Revised Code. If the amount is certified to the superintendent, the superintendent shall make an assessment for that amount against the taxpayer under Chapter 5725. or 5729. of the Revised Code. The time limitations on assessments under those chapters do not apply to an assessment under this division, but the commissioner or superintendent, as appropriate, shall make the assessment within one year after the date the authority certifies to the commissioner or superintendent the amount to be refunded.

(L) On or before the thirty-first day of March each year, the director of development shall submit a report to the governor, the president of the senate, and the speaker of the house of representatives on the tax credit program under this section. The report shall include information on the number of agreements that were entered into under this section during the preceding calendar year, a description of the project that is the subject

of each such agreement, and an update on the status of projects under agreements entered into before the preceding calendar year.

(M) There is hereby created the tax credit authority, which consists of the director of development and four other members appointed as follows: the governor, the president of the senate, and the speaker of the house of representatives each shall appoint one member who shall be a specialist in economic development; the governor also shall appoint a member who is a specialist in taxation. Of the initial appointees, the members appointed by the governor shall serve a term of two years; the members appointed by the president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives shall serve a term of four years. Thereafter, terms of office shall be for four years. Initial appointments to the authority shall be made within thirty days after January 13, 1993. Each member shall serve on the authority until the end of the term for which the member was appointed. Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner provided for original appointments. Any member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the expiration of the term for which the member's predecessor was appointed shall hold office for the remainder of that term. Members may be reappointed to the authority. Members of the authority shall receive their necessary and actual expenses while engaged in the business of the authority. The director of development shall serve as chairperson of the authority, and the members annually shall elect a vice-chairperson from among themselves. Three members of the authority constitute a quorum to transact and vote on the business of the authority. The majority vote of the membership of the authority is necessary to approve any such business, including the election of the vice-chairperson.

The director of development may appoint a professional employee of the department of development to serve as the director's substitute at a meeting of the authority. The director shall make the appointment in writing. In the absence of the director from a meeting of the authority, the appointed substitute shall serve as chairperson. In the absence of both the director and the director's substitute from a meeting, the vice-chairperson shall serve as chairperson.

(N) For purposes of the credits granted by this section against the taxes imposed under sections 5725.18 and 5729.03 of the Revised Code, "taxable year" means the period covered by the taxpayer's annual statement to the superintendent of insurance.

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