

Article 83A – Department of Business and Economic Development
 Section 5-403
 Annotated Code of Maryland
 (1998 Replacement Volume and 1999 Supplement)

BY adding to

Article 41 – Governor – Executive and Administrative Departments
 Section 18-317
 Annotated Code of Maryland
 (1997 Replacement Volume and 1999 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article 83A – Department of Business and Economic Development

5-105.

~~THE DEPARTMENT SHALL GIVE FUNDING PREFERENCE TO BUSINESS PROJECTS LOCATED IN A FOCUS AREA AS DESIGNATED UNDER § 5-402 OF THIS TITLE. WHEN DECIDING WHETHER TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR A BUSINESS PROJECT, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION WHETHER THE PROJECT WILL BE LOCATED IN A FOCUS AREA OR AN ENTERPRISE ZONE AS DESIGNATED UNDER § 5-402 OF THIS TITLE.~~

5-403.

(a) The Secretary may not designate any area an enterprise zone unless that area IS DESIGNATED AS A PRIORITY FUNDING AREA OR MEETS AN EXCEPTION UNDER § 5-7B-02 SUBTITLE 7B OF THE STATE FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT ARTICLE AND satisfies at least one of the following requirements:

(1) The average rate of unemployment in the area, or within a reasonable proximity within that county to that area, for the most recent 18-month period for which data are available must be at least 150 percent of the average rate of unemployment in either the State of Maryland or the United States, whichever average rate is greater, during that same period;

(2) The population in the area or within a reasonable proximity within that county to that area is a low-income poverty area;

(3) At least 70 percent of the families living in the area or within a reasonable proximity within that county to that area have incomes that are less than an amount equal to 80 percent of the median family income within the political subdivision in which the area is located; or

(4) Population in the area or within a reasonable proximity within that county to that area decreased by 10 percent between the date of the most recent census and the date of the immediately preceding census, and the political subdivision can demonstrate to the Secretary's satisfaction that either chronic