

LEGISLATIVE BILL 914

Approved by the Governor March 19, 2008

Introduced by Revenue Committee: Janssen, 15, Chairperson; Burling, 33; Cornett, 45; Dierks, 40; Langemeier, 23; Preister, 5; Raikes, 25; White, 8.

FOR AN ACT relating to revenue and taxation; to amend sections 66-723, 77-1783.01, 77-2709, 77-2777, 77-2778, 77-2780, 77-2792, 77-2793, 77-2796, 77-27,100, 77-4104, 77-4928, 77-5405, 77-5534, and 79-1034, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, sections 21-2612, 66-720, 66-722, 66-1344, 77-2775, 77-5723, and 77-5726, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2006, and sections 77-2711 and 77-27,187.02, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2007; to change provisions relating to limited liability companies, timeframes for certain filings and protests, interest and delinquent taxes, and a report; to eliminate funds; to create a fund; to provide operative dates; to repeal the original sections; and to outright repeal section 77-5732, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2006.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

Section 1. Section 21-2612, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2006, is amended to read:

21-2612 (1) The members and managers of a limited liability company shall not be liable under a judgment, decree, or order of a court or in any other manner for a debt, obligation, or liability of the limited liability company. Except as otherwise specifically set forth in the Limited Liability Company Act, no member, manager, employee, or agent of a limited liability company shall be personally liable under any judgment, decree, or order of any court, agency, or other tribunal in this or any other state, or on any other basis, for any debt, obligation, or liability of the limited liability company.

~~(2) The members of a limited liability company, including members acting as managers, shall be liable in the same manner as a corporate officer for unpaid taxes imposed upon a limited liability company when management is reserved to the members. If management is not reserved to the members, the managers of a limited liability company shall be liable in the same manner as a corporate officer for unpaid taxes imposed upon the limited liability company.~~

(2) Any member, manager, or employee of a limited liability company with the duty to collect, account for, or pay over any taxes imposed upon a limited liability company or with the authority to decide whether the limited liability company will pay taxes imposed upon a limited liability company shall be personally liable for the payment of such taxes in the event of willful failure on his or her part to have a limited liability company perform such act. Such taxes shall be collected in the same manner as provided under section 77-1783.01.

Sec. 2. Section 66-720, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2006, is amended to read:

66-720 (1) Any license or permit issued by the department under the motor fuel laws may be suspended for the following reasons:

- (a) Cancellation of security;
- (b) Failure to provide additional security as required;
- (c) Failure to file any report or return, filing an incomplete report or return, or not filing electronically, within the time provided;
- (d) Failure to pay taxes due within the time provided;
- (e) Filing of any false report, return, statement, or affidavit, knowing it to be false;
- (f) Delivering motor fuel to a Nebraska destination if Nebraska is not listed as the destination state on the original bill of sale, bill of lading, or manifest except as authorized under section 66-503;
- (g) Failure to remain in compliance with requirements of the State Fire Marshal regarding underground storage tanks;
- (h) Failure to remain in compliance with requirements of the Department of Agriculture regarding weights and measures;
- (i) Using or placing dyed diesel fuel in a motor vehicle except as authorized under section 66-495.01;
- (j) No longer being eligible to obtain a license or permit; or
- (k) Any other violation of the motor fuel laws or the rules and regulations.

(2) The department shall mail notice of suspension of any license or

permit.

(3) The licensee or permitholder may, within ~~thirty~~ sixty days after the mailing of the notice of such suspension, petition the Department of Revenue in writing for a hearing and reconsideration of such suspension. If a petition is filed, the department shall, within ten days of receipt of the petition, set a hearing date at which the licensee or permitholder may show cause why his or her suspended license or permit should not be canceled. The department shall give the licensee or permitholder reasonable notice of the time and place of such hearing. Within a reasonable time after the conclusion of the hearing, the department shall issue an order either reinstating or canceling such license or permit.

(4) If a petition is not filed within the ~~thirty-day~~ sixty-day period, the suspended license or permit shall be canceled by the department at the expiration of the period.

(5) The department shall not issue a new permit or license to the same person for one year from the date of cancellation. Any reissuance of a permit or license to the same person within three years from the date of cancellation shall require a reinstatement fee of one hundred dollars to be submitted to the department. The department shall remit the fee to the State Treasurer for credit to the Highway Cash Fund.

(6) Suspension or cancellation of a license or permit issued by the department shall not relieve any person from making or filing the reports or returns required by the motor fuel laws in the manner or within the time required.

Sec. 3. Section 66-722, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2006, is amended to read:

66-722 (1) As soon as practical after a return is filed, the department shall examine it to determine the correct amount of tax. If the department finds that the amount of tax shown on the return is less than the correct amount, it shall notify the taxpayer of the amount of the deficiency determined.

(2) If any person fails to file a return or has improperly purchased motor fuel without the payment of tax, the department shall estimate the person's liability from any available information and notify the person of the amount of the deficiency determined.

(3) The amount of the deficiency determined shall constitute a final assessment together with interest and penalties ~~thirty~~ sixty days after the date on which notice was mailed to the taxpayer at his or her last-known address unless a written protest is filed with the department within such ~~thirty-day~~ sixty-day period.

(4) The final assessment provisions of this section shall constitute a final decision of the agency for purposes of the Administrative Procedure Act.

(5) An assessment made by the department shall be presumed to be correct. In any case when the validity of the assessment is questioned, the burden shall be on the person who challenges the assessment to establish by a preponderance of the evidence that the assessment is erroneous or excessive.

(6) (a) Except in the case of a fraudulent return or of neglect or refusal to make a return, the notice of a proposed deficiency determination shall be mailed within three years after the twenty-fifth day of the month following the end of the period for which the amount proposed is to be determined or within three years after the return is filed, whichever period expires later.

(b) The taxpayer and the department may agree, prior to the expiration of the period in subdivision (a) of this subsection, to extend the period during which the notice of a deficiency determination can be mailed. The extension of the period for the mailing of a deficiency determination shall also extend the period during which a refund can be claimed.

Sec. 4. Section 66-723, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

66-723 (1) Any corporate officer or employee with the authority to decide whether the corporation will pay the taxes imposed upon a corporation by the motor fuel laws, to file any reports or returns required by the motor fuel laws, or to perform any other act required of a corporation under the motor fuel laws shall be personally liable for the payment of the taxes, interest, penalties, or other administrative penalties in the event of willful failure on his or her part to have the corporation perform such act. Such taxes shall be collected in the same manner as provided under the Uniform State Tax Lien Registration and Enforcement Act.

(2) Within ~~thirty~~ sixty days after the day on which the notice and demand are made for the payment of such taxes, any corporate officer or employee seeking to challenge the Tax Commissioner's determination as

to his or her personal liability for the corporation's unpaid taxes may petition for a redetermination. The petition may include a request for the redetermination of the personal liability of the corporate officer or employee, the redetermination of the amount of the corporation's unpaid taxes, or both. If a petition for redetermination is not filed within the ~~thirty-day~~ sixty-day period, the determination becomes final at the expiration of the period.

(3) If the requirements prescribed in subsection (2) of this section are satisfied, the Tax Commissioner shall abate collection proceedings and shall grant the corporate officer or employee an oral hearing and give him or her ten days' notice of the time and place of such hearing. The Tax Commissioner may continue the hearing from time to time as necessary.

(4) Any notice required under this section shall be served personally or by mail in the manner provided in section 66-721.

(5) If the Tax Commissioner determines that further delay in the collection of such taxes from the corporate officer or employee will jeopardize future collection proceedings, nothing in this section shall prevent the immediate collection of such taxes.

(6) For purposes of this section:

(a) Corporation shall mean any corporation and any other entity that is taxed as a corporation under the Internal Revenue Code;

(b) Taxes shall mean all taxes and additions to taxes including interest and penalties imposed under the motor fuel laws which are administered by the Tax Commissioner; and

(c) Willful failure shall mean that failure which was the result of an intentional, conscious, and voluntary action.

Sec. 5. Section 66-1344, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2006, is amended to read:

66-1344 (1) Beginning June 1, 2000, during such period as funds remain in the Ethanol Production Incentive Cash Fund, any ethanol facility shall receive a credit of seven and one-half cents per gallon of ethanol, before denaturing, for new production for a period not to exceed thirty-six consecutive months. For purposes of this subsection, new production means production which results from the expansion of an existing facility's capacity by at least two million gallons first placed into service after June 1, 1999, as certified by the facility's design engineer to the Department of Revenue. For expansion of an existing facility's capacity, new production means production in excess of the average of the highest three months of ethanol production at an ethanol facility during the twenty-four-month period immediately preceding certification of the facility by the design engineer. No credits shall be allowed under this subsection for expansion of an existing facility's capacity until production is in excess of twelve times the three-month average amount determined under this subsection during any twelve-consecutive-month period beginning no sooner than June 1, 2000. New production shall be approved by the Department of Revenue based on such ethanol production records as may be necessary to reasonably determine new production. This credit must be earned on or before December 31, 2003.

(2)(a) Beginning January 1, 2002, any new ethanol facility which is in production at the minimum rate of one hundred thousand gallons annually for the production of ethanol, before denaturing, and which has provided to the Department of Revenue written evidence substantiating that the ethanol facility has received the requisite authority from the Department of Environmental Quality and from the United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, on or before June 30, 2004, shall receive a credit of eighteen cents per gallon of ethanol produced for ninety-six consecutive months beginning with the first calendar month for which it is eligible to receive such credit and ending not later than June 30, 2012, if the facility is defined by subdivision (b)(i) of this subsection, and for forty-eight consecutive months beginning with the first calendar month for which it is eligible to receive such credit and ending not later than June 30, 2008, if the facility is defined by subdivision (b)(ii) of this subsection. The new ethanol facility shall provide an analysis to the Department of Revenue of samples of the product collected according to procedures specified by the department no later than July 30, 2004, and at least annually thereafter. The analysis shall be prepared by an independent laboratory meeting the International Organization for Standardization standard ISO/IEC 17025:1999. Prior to collecting the samples, the new ethanol facility shall notify the department which may observe the sampling procedures utilized by the new ethanol facility to obtain the samples to be submitted for independent analysis. The minimum rate shall be established for a period of at least thirty days. In this regard, the new ethanol facility must produce at least eight thousand two hundred nineteen gallons of ethanol within a

thirty-day period. The ethanol must be finished product which is ready for sale to customers.

(b) For purposes of this subsection, new ethanol facility means a facility for the conversion of grain or other raw feedstock into ethanol and other byproducts of ethanol production which (i) is not in production on or before September 1, 2001, or (ii) has not received credits prior to June 1, 1999. A new ethanol facility does not mean an expansion of an existing ethanol plant that does not result in the physical construction of an entire ethanol processing facility or which shares or uses in a significant manner any existing plant's systems or processes and does not include the expansion of production capacity constructed after June 30, 2004, of a plant qualifying for credits under this subsection. This definition applies to contracts entered into after April 16, 2004.

(c) Not more than fifteen million six hundred twenty-five thousand gallons of ethanol produced annually at an ethanol facility shall be eligible for credits under this subsection. Not more than one hundred twenty-five million gallons of ethanol produced at an ethanol facility by the end of the ninety-six-consecutive-month period or forty-eight-consecutive-month period set forth in this subsection shall be eligible for credits under this subsection.

(3) The credits described in this section shall be given only for ethanol produced at a plant in Nebraska at which all fermentation, distillation, and dehydration takes place. No credit shall be given on ethanol produced for or sold for use in the production of beverage alcohol. Not more than ten million gallons of ethanol produced during any twelve-consecutive-month period at an ethanol facility shall be eligible for the credit described in subsection (1) of this section. The credits described in this section shall be in the form of a nonrefundable, transferable motor vehicle fuel tax credit certificate. No transfer of credits will be allowed between the ethanol producer and motor vehicle fuel licensees who are related parties.

(4) Ethanol production eligible for credits under this section shall be measured by a device approved by the Division of Weights and Measures of the Department of Agriculture. Confirmation of approval by the division shall be provided by the ethanol facility at the time the initial claim for credits provided under this section is submitted to the Department of Revenue and annually thereafter. Claims submitted by the ethanol producer shall be based on the total number of gallons of ethanol produced, before denaturing, during the reporting period measured in gross gallons.

(5) The Department of Revenue shall prescribe an application form and procedures for claiming credits under this section. In order for a claim for credits to be accepted, it must be filed by the ethanol producer within three years of the date the ethanol was produced or by September 30, 2012, whichever occurs first.

(6) Every producer of ethanol shall maintain records similar to those required by section 66-487. The ethanol producer must maintain invoices, meter readings, load-out sheets or documents, inventory records, including work-in-progress, finished goods, and denaturant, and other memoranda requested by the Department of Revenue relevant to the production of ethanol. On an annual basis, the ethanol producer shall also be required to furnish the department with copies of the reports filed with the United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The maintenance of all of this information in a provable computer format or on microfilm is acceptable in lieu of retention of the original documents. The records must be retained for a period of not less than three years after the claim for ethanol credits is filed.

(7) For purposes of ascertaining the correctness of any application for claiming a credit provided in this section, the Tax Commissioner (a) may examine or cause to have examined, by any agent or representative designated by him or her for that purpose, any books, papers, records, or memoranda bearing upon such matters, (b) may by summons require the attendance of the person responsible for rendering the application or other document or any officer or employee of such person or the attendance of any other person having knowledge in the premises, and (c) may take testimony and require proof material for his or her information, with power to administer oaths or affirmations to such person or persons. The time and place of examination pursuant to this subsection shall be such time and place as may be fixed by the Tax Commissioner and as are reasonable under the circumstances. In the case of a summons, the date fixed for appearance before the Tax Commissioner shall not be less than twenty days from the time of service of the summons. No taxpayer shall be subjected to unreasonable or unnecessary examinations or investigations. All records obtained pursuant to this subsection shall be

subject to the confidentiality requirements and exceptions thereto as provided in section 77-27,119.

(8) To qualify for credits under this section, an ethanol producer shall provide public notice for bids before entering into any contract for the construction of a new ethanol facility. Preference shall be given to a bidder residing in Nebraska when awarding any contract for construction of a new ethanol facility if comparable bids are submitted. For purposes of this subsection, bidder residing in Nebraska means any person, partnership, foreign or domestic limited liability company, association, or corporation authorized to engage in business in the state with employees permanently located in Nebraska. If an ethanol producer enters into a contract for the construction of a new ethanol facility with a bidder who is not a bidder residing in Nebraska, such producer shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Department of Revenue in its application for credits that no comparable bid was submitted by a responsible bidder residing in Nebraska. The department shall deny an application for credits if it is determined that the contract was denied to a responsible bidder residing in Nebraska without cause.

(9) The pertinent provisions of Chapter 66, article 7, relating to the administration and imposition of motor fuel taxes shall apply to the administration and imposition of assessments made by the Department of Revenue relating to excess credits claimed by ethanol producers under the Ethanol Development Act. These provisions include, but are not limited to, issuance of a deficiency following an examination of records, an assessment becoming final after ~~thirty~~ sixty days absent a written protest, presumptions regarding the burden of proof, issuance of deficiency within three years of original filing, issuance of notice by registered or certified mail, issuance of penalties and waiver thereof, issuance of interest and waiver thereof, and issuance of corporate officer or employee or limited liability company manager or member assessments. For purposes of determining interest and penalties, the due date will be considered to be the date on which the credits were used by the licensees to whom the credits were transferred.

(10) If a written protest is filed by the ethanol producer with the department within the ~~thirty-day~~ sixty-day period in subsection (9) of this section, the protest shall: (a) Identify the ethanol producer; (b) identify the proposed assessment which is being protested; (c) set forth each ground under which a redetermination of the department's position is requested together with facts sufficient to acquaint the department with the exact basis thereof; (d) demand the relief to which the ethanol producer considers itself entitled; and (e) request that an evidentiary hearing be held to determine any issues raised by the protest if the ethanol producer desires such a hearing.

(11) For applications received after April 16, 2004, an ethanol facility receiving benefits under the Ethanol Development Act shall not be eligible for benefits under the Employment and Investment Growth Act, the Invest Nebraska Act, or the Nebraska Advantage Act.

Sec. 6. Section 77-1783.01, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

77-1783.01 (1) Any officer or employee with the duty to collect, account for, or pay over any taxes imposed upon a corporation or with the authority to decide whether the corporation will pay taxes imposed upon a corporation shall be personally liable for the payment of such taxes in the event of willful failure on his or her part to have a corporation perform such act. Such taxes shall be collected in the same manner as provided under the Uniform State Tax Lien Registration and Enforcement Act.

(2) Within ~~thirty~~ sixty days after the day on which the notice and demand are made for the payment of such taxes, any officer or employee seeking to challenge the Tax Commissioner's determination as to his or her personal liability for the corporation's unpaid taxes may petition for a redetermination. The petition may include a request for the redetermination of the personal liability of the corporate officer or employee, the redetermination of the amount of the corporation's unpaid taxes, or both. If a petition for redetermination is not filed within the ~~thirty-day~~ sixty-day period, the determination becomes final at the expiration of the period.

(3) If the requirements prescribed in subsection (2) of this section are satisfied, the Tax Commissioner shall abate collection proceedings and shall grant the officer or employee an oral hearing and give him or her ten days' notice of the time and place of such hearing. The Tax Commissioner may continue the hearing from time to time as necessary.

(4) Any notice required under this section shall be served personally or by mail in the manner provided in section 77-27,135.

(5) If the Tax Commissioner determines that further delay in the collection of such taxes from the officer or employee will jeopardize future collection proceedings, nothing in this section shall prevent the immediate

collection of such taxes.

(6) For purposes of this section:

(a) Corporation shall mean any corporation and any other entity that is taxed as a corporation under the Internal Revenue Code;

(b) Taxes shall mean all taxes and additions to taxes including interest and penalties imposed under the revenue laws of this state which are administered by the Tax Commissioner; and

(c) Willful failure shall mean that failure which was the result of an intentional, conscious, and voluntary action.

Sec. 7. Section 77-2709, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

77-2709 (1) If the Tax Commissioner is not satisfied with the return or returns of the tax or the amount of tax required to be paid to the state by any person, he or she may compute and determine the amount required to be paid upon the basis of the facts contained in the return or returns or upon the basis of any information within his or her possession or which may come into his or her possession. One or more deficiency determinations of the amount due for one or more than one period may be made. To the amount of the deficiency determination for each period shall be added a penalty equal to ten percent thereof or twenty-five dollars, whichever is greater. In making a determination, the Tax Commissioner may offset overpayments for a period or periods, together with interest on the overpayments, against underpayments for other period or periods, against penalties, and against the interest on the underpayments.

The interest on underpayments and overpayments shall be computed in the manner set forth hereinafter.

(2) If any person fails to make a return, the Tax Commissioner shall make an estimate of the amount of the gross receipts of the person or, as the case may be, of the amount of the total sales, rent, or lease price of property sold, rented, or leased or purchased, by the person, the storage, use, or consumption of which in this state is subject to the use tax. The estimate shall be made for the period or periods in respect to which the person failed to make a return and shall be based upon any information which is in the Tax Commissioner's possession or may come into his or her possession. Upon the basis of this estimate, the Tax Commissioner shall compute and determine the amount required to be paid to the state, adding to the sum thus arrived at a penalty equal to ten percent thereof or twenty-five dollars, whichever is greater. One or more determinations may be made for one or more than one period.

(3) The amount of the determination of any deficiency exclusive of penalties shall bear interest at the rate specified in section 45-104.02, as such rate may from time to time be adjusted, from the twenty-fifth of the month following the period for which the amount should have been returned until the date of payment.

(4) If any part of a deficiency for which a deficiency determination is made is the result of fraud or an intent to evade the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967 or authorized rules and regulations, a penalty of twenty-five percent of the amount of the determination or fifty dollars, whichever is greater, shall be added thereto.

(5) (a) Promptly after making his or her determination, the Tax Commissioner shall give to the person written notice of his or her determination.

(b) The notice may be served personally or by mail, and if by mail the notice shall be addressed to the person at his or her address as it appears in the records of the Tax Commissioner. In case of service by mail of any notice required by the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967, the service is complete at the time of deposit in the United States post office.

(c) Every notice of a deficiency determination shall be personally served or mailed within three years after the last day of the calendar month following the period for which the amount is proposed to be determined or within three years after the return is filed, whichever period expires the later. In the case of failure to make a return, every notice of determination shall be mailed or personally served within five years after the last day of the calendar month following the period for which the amount is proposed to be determined.

(d) When, before the expiration of the time prescribed in this section for the mailing of a notice of deficiency determination, both the Tax Commissioner and the taxpayer have consented in writing to its mailing after such time, the notice of the deficiency determination may be mailed at any time prior to the expiration of the period agreed upon. The agreed-upon period may be extended by subsequent agreement, in writing, made before the expiration of the period previously agreed upon.

(6) When a business is discontinued, a determination may be made at any time thereafter within the periods specified in this section as to liability arising out of that business, irrespective of whether the determination is issued prior to the due date of the liability as otherwise specified in the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967.

(7) Any person against whom a determination is made under subsections (1) and (2) of this section or any person directly interested may petition for a redetermination within ~~thirty~~ sixty days after service upon the person of notice thereof. For the purposes of this subsection, a person is directly interested in a deficiency determination when such deficiency could be collected from such person. If a petition for redetermination is not filed within the ~~thirty-day~~ sixty-day period, the determination becomes final at the expiration of the period.

(8) If a petition for redetermination is filed within the ~~thirty-day~~ sixty-day period, the Tax Commissioner shall reconsider the determination and, if the person has so requested in his or her petition, shall grant the person an oral hearing and shall give him or her ten days' notice of the time and place of the hearing. The Tax Commissioner may continue the hearing from time to time as may be necessary.

(9) The Tax Commissioner may decrease or increase the amount of the determination before it becomes final, but the amount may be increased only if a claim for the increase is asserted by the Tax Commissioner at or before the hearing, upon which assertion the petitioner shall be entitled to a thirty-day continuance of the hearing to allow him or her to obtain and produce further evidence applicable to the items upon which the increase is based.

(10) The order or decision of the Tax Commissioner upon a petition for redetermination shall become final thirty days after service upon the petitioner of notice thereof.

(11) All determinations made by the Tax Commissioner under the provisions of subsections (1) and (2) of this section are due and payable at the time they become final. If they are not paid when due and payable, a penalty of ten percent of the amount of the determination, exclusive of interest and penalties, shall be added thereto.

(12) Any notice required by this section shall be served personally or by mail in the manner prescribed in subsection (5) of this section.

Sec. 8. Section 77-2711, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2007, is amended to read:

77-2711 (1)(a) The Tax Commissioner shall enforce sections 77-2701.04 to 77-2713 and may prescribe, adopt, and enforce rules and regulations relating to the administration and enforcement of such sections.

(b) The Tax Commissioner may prescribe the extent to which any ruling or regulation shall be applied without retroactive effect.

(2) The Tax Commissioner may employ accountants, auditors, investigators, assistants, and clerks necessary for the efficient administration of the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967 and may delegate authority to his or her representatives to conduct hearings, prescribe regulations, or perform any other duties imposed by such act.

(3)(a) Every seller, every retailer, and every person storing, using, or otherwise consuming in this state property purchased from a retailer shall keep such records, receipts, invoices, and other pertinent papers in such form as the Tax Commissioner may reasonably require.

(b) Every such seller, retailer, or person shall keep such records for not less than three years from the making of such records unless the Tax Commissioner in writing sooner authorized their destruction.

(4) The Tax Commissioner or any person authorized in writing by him or her may examine the books, papers, records, and equipment of any person selling property and any person liable for the use tax and may investigate the character of the business of the person in order to verify the accuracy of any return made or, if no return is made by the person, to ascertain and determine the amount required to be paid. In the examination of any person selling property or of any person liable for the use tax, an inquiry shall be made as to the accuracy of the reporting of city sales and use taxes for which the person is liable under the Local Option Revenue Act or sections 13-319, 13-324, and 13-2813 and the accuracy of the allocation made between the various counties, cities, villages, and municipal counties of the tax due. The Tax Commissioner may make or cause to be made copies of resale or exemption certificates and may pay a reasonable amount to the person having custody of the records for providing such copies.

(5) The taxpayer shall have the right to keep or store his or her records at a point outside this state and shall make his or her records available to the Tax Commissioner at all times.

(6) In administration of the use tax, the Tax Commissioner may

require the filing of reports by any person or class of persons having in his, her, or their possession or custody information relating to sales of property, the storage, use, or other consumption of which is subject to the tax. The report shall be filed when the Tax Commissioner requires and shall set forth the names and addresses of purchasers of the property, the sales price of the property, the date of sale, and such other information as the Tax Commissioner may require.

(7) It shall be a Class I misdemeanor for the Tax Commissioner or any official or employee of the Tax Commissioner, the State Treasurer, or the Department of Administrative Services to make known in any manner whatever the business affairs, operations, or information obtained by an investigation of records and activities of any retailer or any other person visited or examined in the discharge of official duty or the amount or source of income, profits, losses, expenditures, or any particular thereof, set forth or disclosed in any return, or to permit any return or copy thereof, or any book containing any abstract or particulars thereof to be seen or examined by any person not connected with the Tax Commissioner. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit (a) the delivery to a taxpayer, his or her duly authorized representative, or his or her successors, receivers, trustees, executors, administrators, assignees, or guarantors, if directly interested, of a certified copy of any return or report in connection with his or her tax, (b) the publication of statistics so classified as to prevent the identification of particular reports or returns and the items thereof, (c) the inspection by the Attorney General, other legal representative of the state, or county attorney of the reports or returns of any taxpayer when either (i) information on the reports or returns is considered by the Attorney General to be relevant to any action or proceeding instituted by the taxpayer or against whom an action or proceeding is being considered or has been commenced by any state agency or the county or (ii) the taxpayer has instituted an action to review the tax based thereon or an action or proceeding against the taxpayer for collection of tax or failure to comply with the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967 is being considered or has been commenced, (d) the furnishing of any information to the United States Government or to states allowing similar privileges to the Tax Commissioner, (e) the disclosure of information and records to a collection agency contracting with the Tax Commissioner pursuant to sections 77-377.01 to 77-377.04, (f) the disclosure to another party to a transaction of information and records concerning the transaction between the taxpayer and the other party, or (g) the disclosure of information pursuant to section 77-27,195 or 77-5731.

(8) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (7) of this section, the Tax Commissioner may permit the Postal Inspector of the United States Postal Service or his or her delegates to inspect the reports or returns of any person filed pursuant to the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967 when information on the reports or returns is relevant to any action or proceeding instituted or being considered by the United States Postal Service against such person for the fraudulent use of the mails to carry and deliver false and fraudulent tax returns to the Tax Commissioner with the intent to defraud the State of Nebraska or to evade the payment of Nebraska state taxes.

(9) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (7) of this section, the Tax Commissioner may permit other tax officials of this state to inspect the tax returns, reports, and applications filed under sections 77-2701.04 to 77-2713, but such inspection shall be permitted only for purposes of enforcing a tax law and only to the extent and under the conditions prescribed by the rules and regulations of the Tax Commissioner.

(10) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (7) of this section, the Tax Commissioner may, upon request, provide the county board of any county which has exercised the authority granted by section 81-1254 with a list of the names and addresses of the hotels located within the county for which lodging sales tax returns have been filed or for which lodging sales taxes have been remitted for the county's County Visitors Promotion Fund under the Nebraska Visitors Development Act.

The information provided by the Tax Commissioner shall indicate only the names and addresses of the hotels located within the requesting county for which lodging sales tax returns have been filed for a specified period and the fact that lodging sales taxes remitted by or on behalf of the hotel have constituted a portion of the total sum remitted by the state to the county for a specified period under the provisions of the Nebraska Visitors Development Act. No additional information shall be revealed.

(11)(a) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (7) of this section, the Tax Commissioner shall, upon written request by the Auditor of Public Accounts or the Legislative Performance Audit Committee, make tax returns and tax return information open to inspection by or disclosure to

Auditor of Public Accounts or Legislative Performance Audit Section employees for the purpose of and to the extent necessary in making an audit of the Department of Revenue pursuant to section 50-1205 or 84-304. Confidential tax returns and tax return information shall be audited only upon the premises of the Department of Revenue. All audit workpapers pertaining to the audit of the Department of Revenue shall be stored in a secure place in the Department of Revenue.

(b) No employee of the Auditor of Public Accounts or Legislative Performance Audit Section shall disclose to any person, other than another Auditor of Public Accounts or Legislative Performance Audit Section employee whose official duties require such disclosure or as provided in subsections (2) and (3) of section 50-1213, any return or return information described in the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967 in a form which can be associated with or otherwise identify, directly or indirectly, a particular taxpayer.

(c) Any person who violates the provisions of this subsection shall be guilty of a Class I misdemeanor. For purposes of this subsection, employee includes a former Auditor of Public Accounts or Legislative Performance Audit Section employee.

(12) For purposes of ~~subsections (11) and (12)~~ this subsection and subsection (11) of this section:

(a) Disclosure means the making known to any person in any manner a tax return or return information;

(b) Return information means:

(i) A taxpayer's identification number and (A) the nature, source, or amount of his or her income, payments, receipts, deductions, exemptions, credits, assets, liabilities, net worth, tax liability, tax withheld, deficiencies, overassessments, or tax payments, whether the taxpayer's return was, is being, or will be examined or subject to other investigation or processing or (B) any other data received by, recorded by, prepared by, furnished to, or collected by the Tax Commissioner with respect to a return or the determination of the existence or possible existence of liability or the amount of liability of any person for any tax, penalty, interest, fine, forfeiture, or other imposition or offense; and

(ii) Any part of any written determination or any background file document relating to such written determination; and

(c) Tax return or return means any tax or information return or claim for refund required by, provided for, or permitted under sections 77-2701 to 77-2713 which is filed with the Tax Commissioner by, on behalf of, or with respect to any person and any amendment or supplement thereto, including supporting schedules, attachments, or lists which are supplemental to or part of the filed return.

(13) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (7) of this section, the Tax Commissioner shall, upon request, provide any municipality which has adopted the local option sales tax under the Local Option Revenue Act with a list of the names and addresses of the retailers which have collected the local option sales tax for the municipality. The request may be made annually and shall be submitted to the Tax Commissioner on or before June 30 of each year. The information provided by the Tax Commissioner shall indicate only the names and addresses of the retailers. No additional information shall be revealed.

(14) In all proceedings under the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967, the Tax Commissioner may act for and on behalf of the people of the State of Nebraska. The Tax Commissioner in his or her discretion may waive all or part of any penalties provided by the provisions of such act, ~~but may not waive the minimum or interest on delinquent taxes specified in section 45-104.02, as such rate may from time to time be adjusted, except interest on use taxes voluntarily reported by an individual.~~

(15) (a) The purpose of this subsection is to set forth the state's policy for the protection of the confidentiality rights of all participants in the system operated pursuant to the streamlined sales and use tax agreement and of the privacy interests of consumers who deal with model 1 sellers.

(b) For purposes of this subsection:

(i) Anonymous data means information that does not identify a person;

(ii) Confidential taxpayer information means all information that is protected under a member state's laws, regulations, and privileges; and

(iii) Personally identifiable information means information that identifies a person.

(c) The state agrees that a fundamental precept for model 1 sellers is to preserve the privacy of consumers by protecting their anonymity. With very limited exceptions, a certified service provider shall perform its tax calculation, remittance, and reporting functions without retaining the

personally identifiable information of consumers.

(d) The governing board of the member states in the streamlined sales and use tax agreement may certify a certified service provider only if that certified service provider certifies that:

(i) Its system has been designed and tested to ensure that the fundamental precept of anonymity is respected;

(ii) Personally identifiable information is only used and retained to the extent necessary for the administration of model 1 with respect to exempt purchasers;

(iii) It provides consumers clear and conspicuous notice of its information practices, including what information it collects, how it collects the information, how it uses the information, how long, if at all, it retains the information, and whether it discloses the information to member states. Such notice shall be satisfied by a written privacy policy statement accessible by the public on the web site of the certified service provider;

(iv) Its collection, use, and retention of personally identifiable information is limited to that required by the member states to ensure the validity of exemptions from taxation that are claimed by reason of a consumer's status or the intended use of the goods or services purchased; and

(v) It provides adequate technical, physical, and administrative safeguards so as to protect personally identifiable information from unauthorized access and disclosure.

(e) The state shall provide public notification to consumers, including exempt purchasers, of the state's practices relating to the collection, use, and retention of personally identifiable information.

(f) When any personally identifiable information that has been collected and retained is no longer required for the purposes set forth in subdivision (15)(d)(iv) of this section, such information shall no longer be retained by the member states.

(g) When personally identifiable information regarding an individual is retained by or on behalf of the state, it shall provide reasonable access by such individual to his or her own information in the state's possession and a right to correct any inaccurately recorded information.

(h) If anyone other than a member state, or a person authorized by that state's law or the agreement, seeks to discover personally identifiable information, the state from whom the information is sought should make a reasonable and timely effort to notify the individual of such request.

(i) This privacy policy is subject to enforcement by the Attorney General.

(j) All other laws and regulations regarding the collection, use, and maintenance of confidential taxpayer information remain fully applicable and binding. Without limitation, this subsection does not enlarge or limit the state's authority to:

(i) Conduct audits or other reviews as provided under the agreement and state law;

(ii) Provide records pursuant to the federal Freedom of Information Act, disclosure laws with governmental agencies, or other regulations;

(iii) Prevent, consistent with state law, disclosure of confidential taxpayer information;

(iv) Prevent, consistent with federal law, disclosure or misuse of federal return information obtained under a disclosure agreement with the Internal Revenue Service; and

(v) Collect, disclose, disseminate, or otherwise use anonymous data for governmental purposes.

Sec. 9. Section 77-2775, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2006, is amended to read:

77-2775 (1) If the amount of a taxpayer's federal adjusted gross income, taxable income, or tax liability reported on his or her federal income tax return for any taxable year is changed or corrected by the Internal Revenue Service or other competent authority or as the result of a renegotiation of a contract or subcontract with the United States, the taxpayer shall report such change or correction in federal adjusted gross income, taxable income, or tax liability within ~~ninety~~ sixty days after the final determination of such change, correction, or renegotiation.

(2) Whenever the amount of a taxpayer's income which is taxable in any state for any taxable year or any tax credits allowable in such state are changed or corrected in a way material to the tax liability owed to this state by the agency having authority to examine returns filed with such state or any other competent authority or whenever an amended return is filed by any taxpayer with a change or correction material to the tax liability owed to this state with another state, such change or correction shall be reported to the Tax Commissioner within ~~ninety~~ sixty days after the final change or

correction or filing of the amended return. The Tax Commissioner shall by rule and regulation provide the nature of any change or correction which must be reported.

(3) The taxpayer shall report all changes or corrections required to be reported under this section by filing an amended income tax return and shall give such information as the Tax Commissioner may require. The taxpayer shall concede the accuracy of any change or correction or state why it is erroneous.

(4) Any taxpayer filing an amended federal income tax return shall also file within ~~ninety~~ sixty days thereafter an amended income tax return under the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967 and shall give such information as the Tax Commissioner may require. For any amended federal income tax return requesting a credit or refund, the amended Nebraska income tax return shall be filed within ~~ninety~~ sixty days after the taxpayer has received proof of federal acceptance of the credit or refund or within the time for filing an amended Nebraska income tax return that would otherwise be applicable notwithstanding the amended federal income tax return, whichever is later.

Sec. 10. Section 77-2777, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

77-2777 ~~Ninety~~ Sixty days after the date on which it was mailed, or one hundred fifty days if the taxpayer is outside the United States, ~~or thirty days if the amount of the deficiency relates to tax withheld or required to be withheld by an employer or payor,~~ a notice of proposed assessment of a deficiency shall constitute a final assessment of the amount of tax specified together with interest, additions to tax, and penalties except only for such amounts as to which the taxpayer has filed a protest with the Tax Commissioner.

Sec. 11. Section 77-2778, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

77-2778 Within ~~ninety~~ sixty days after the mailing of a deficiency notice, or one hundred fifty days if the taxpayer is outside the United States, ~~or thirty days if the amount of the deficiency relates to tax withheld or required to be withheld by an employer or payor,~~ the taxpayer or any person directly interested may file with the Tax Commissioner a written protest against the proposed assessment in which he or she shall set forth the grounds on which the protest is based. If a protest is filed, the Tax Commissioner shall reconsider the assessment of the deficiency and, if the taxpayer has so requested, shall grant the taxpayer or his or her authorized representative an oral hearing. For purposes of this section, a person shall be directly interested in a deficiency determination when such deficiency could be collected from such person.

Sec. 12. Section 77-2780, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

77-2780 The action of the Tax Commissioner on the taxpayer's protest shall be final upon the expiration of ~~ninety~~ sixty days, ~~or thirty days if the amount assessed relates to tax withheld or required to be withheld by an employer or payor,~~ ~~from~~ after the date when the Tax Commissioner mails notice of his or her action to the taxpayer unless within this period the taxpayer seeks review of the Tax Commissioner's determination as provided in the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967.

Sec. 13. Section 77-2792, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

77-2792 (1) The Tax Commissioner may abate the unpaid portion of the assessment of any income tax or any liability in respect thereto which (a) is excessive in amount, (b) is assessed after the expiration of the period of limitations properly applicable thereto, (c) is erroneously or illegally assessed, or (d) is the result of an inconsistent position under section 1311 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(2) No claim for abatement shall be filed by a taxpayer in respect to an assessment of any income tax imposed under the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967.

(3) The Tax Commissioner may abate the unpaid portion of the assessment of any tax or any liability in respect thereto if he or she determines under uniform rules prescribed by him or her that the administration and collection costs involved would not warrant collection of the amount due.

(4) In all proceedings under the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967, the Tax Commissioner may act for and on behalf of the people of the State of Nebraska. The Tax Commissioner in his or her discretion may waive all or part of any penalties provided by such act ~~but may not waive the minimum or interest on delinquent taxes at the rate specified in section 45-104.02, as such rate may from time to time be adjusted,~~ ~~except as provided in this~~

section.

~~(5) The Tax Commissioner may abate interest when:~~

~~(a) The interest is attributable to error or unreasonable delay in performing a ministerial duty by the Department of Revenue or to erroneous written advice given to the taxpayer by the Tax Commissioner or an employee of the department acting in his or her official capacity when the written advice was a direct response to a request from the taxpayer and the taxpayer reasonably relied upon the advice;~~

~~(b) The interest is attributable to an amount previously refunded by the Tax Commissioner for the period interest on such amount was not allowed under section 77-2794;~~

~~(c) The interest is attributable to the recovery of an amount erroneously refunded by the Tax Commissioner for the period the amount was actually held by the state, and the first ninety days after such amount was refunded, when such refund was not requested or caused by information provided by the taxpayer; or~~

~~(d) The interest on the related federal amount was abated by the Internal Revenue Service.~~

Sec. 14. Section 77-2793, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

77-2793 (1) A claim for credit or refund of an overpayment of any income tax imposed by the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967 shall be filed by the taxpayer within three years from the time the return was filed or two years from the time the tax was paid, whichever of such periods expires later. No credit or refund shall be allowed or made after the expiration of the period of limitation prescribed in this subsection for the filing of a claim for credit or refund unless a claim for credit or refund is filed by the taxpayer within such period.

(2) If the claim is filed by the taxpayer during the three-year period prescribed in subsection (1) of this section, the amount of the credit or refund shall not exceed the portion of the tax paid within the three years immediately preceding the filing of the claim plus the period of any extension of time for filing the return if such return was filed prior to the end of the extension of time. If the claim is not filed within such three-year period, but is filed within the two-year period, the amount of the credit or refund shall not exceed the portion of the tax paid during the two years immediately preceding the filing of the claim. If no claim is filed, the credit or refund shall not exceed the amount which would be allowable under either of the preceding sentences, as the case may be, if a claim was filed on the date the credit or refund is allowed.

(3) If an agreement for an extension of the period for assessment of income taxes is made within the period prescribed in subsection (1) of this section for the filing of a claim for credit or refund, the period for filing claim for credit or for making credit or refund if no claim is filed shall not expire prior to six months after the expiration of the period within which an assessment may be made pursuant to the agreement or any extension thereof.

(4) If a taxpayer is required by subsection (1) of section 77-2775 to report a change or correction in federal adjusted gross income, taxable income, or tax liability reported on his or her federal income tax return, or to report a change or correction which is treated in the same manner as if it were an overpayment for federal income tax purposes, or to file an amended return with the Tax Commissioner, a claim for credit or refund of any resulting overpayment of tax shall be filed by the taxpayer within two years from the time the notice of such change or correction or such amended return was required to be filed with the Tax Commissioner. If the report or amended return is not filed within the ~~ninety-day~~ sixty-day period specified in such subsection, interest on any resulting refund or credit shall cease to accrue after such ~~ninetieth~~ sixtieth day. The amount of such credit or refund shall not exceed the amount of the reduction in tax attributable to such federal change, correction, or items amended on the taxpayer's amended federal income tax return. This subsection shall not affect the time within which or the amount for which a claim for credit or refund may be filed apart from this subsection.

~~(5)~~ (5)(a) If a taxpayer is required by subsection (2) of section 77-2775 to report a change or correction in the amount of income taxable or tax credit allowable in one or more states and such changes or corrections when reflected in the return filed under the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967 as most recently amended would result in an overpayment of tax, a claim for credit or refund shall be filed by the taxpayer within the earlier of ~~(a)~~ (i) two years from the time the notice of such change or correction or such amended return was required to be filed with the Tax Commissioner or ~~(b)~~ (ii) ten years from the due date of the return.

(b) If the report or amended return is not filed within the ~~ninety-day~~ sixty-day period specified in such subsection, interest on any resulting refund or credit shall cease to accrue after such ~~ninetieth~~ sixtieth day. The amount of such credit or refund shall not exceed the lesser of (i) the reduction in tax attributable to the change or correction in the amount of income taxable or the credit allowable in such other state in the return filed under the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967 or (ii) the increase in tax actually paid to such other state or states.

(c) This subsection shall not affect the time within which or the amount for which a claim for credit or refund may be filed apart from this subsection. This subsection shall apply to changes or corrections which become final on or after May 1, 1993.

(6) If the claim for credit or refund relates to an overpayment attributable to a net operating loss carryback derived from or connected with Nebraska sources, the claim may be made under rules and regulations prescribed by the Tax Commissioner consistent, to the extent possible under the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967, with the laws of the United States.

(7) For purposes of this section and section 77-2795, a timely filed petition for redetermination shall be considered a claim for credit or refund filed on the date the notice of deficiency determination was mailed.

Sec. 15. Section 77-2796, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

77-2796 If the Tax Commissioner disallows a claim for refund, he or she shall notify the taxpayer accordingly. The action of the Tax Commissioner denying a claim for refund is final upon the expiration of ~~ninety~~ sixty days ~~from~~ after the date when he or she mails notice of his or her action to the taxpayer unless within this period the taxpayer seeks review of the Tax Commissioner's determination as hereinafter provided.

Sec. 16. Section 77-27,100, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

77-27,100 The action authorized in section 77-2798 shall be filed within three years from the last date prescribed for filing the return or within one year from the date the tax was paid, or within ~~ninety~~ sixty days after the denial of a claim for refund by the Tax Commissioner.

Sec. 17. Section 77-27,187.02, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2007, is amended to read:

77-27,187.02 (1) To earn the incentives set forth in the Nebraska Advantage Rural Development Act, the taxpayer shall file an application for an agreement with the Tax Commissioner.

(2) The application shall contain:

(a) A written statement describing the full expected employment or type of livestock production and the investment amount for a qualified business, as described in section 77-27,189, in this state;

(b) Sufficient documents, plans, and specifications as required by the Tax Commissioner to support the plan and to define a project; and

(c) An application fee of five hundred dollars. The fee shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for credit to the Nebraska Advantage Rural Development Incentives Fund, ~~which fund is hereby created. Any money in the fund available for investment shall be invested by the state investment officer pursuant to the Nebraska Capital Expansion Act and the Nebraska State Funds Investment Act.~~ The application and all supporting information shall be confidential except for the name of the taxpayer, the location of the project, and the amounts of increased employment or investment.

(3)(a) The Tax Commissioner shall approve the application and authorize the total amount of credits expected to be earned as a result of the project if he or she is satisfied that the plan in the application defines a project that (i) meets the requirements established in section 77-27,188 and such requirements will be reached within the required time period and (ii) for projects other than livestock modernization or expansion projects, is located in an eligible county or enterprise zone.

(b) The Tax Commissioner shall not approve further applications once the expected credits from the approved projects total two million five hundred thousand dollars in each of fiscal years 2004-05 and 2005-06 and three million dollars in fiscal year 2006-07 and each fiscal year thereafter. Four hundred dollars of the application fee shall be refunded to the applicant if the application is not approved because the expected credits from approved projects exceed such amounts.

(c) Applications for benefits shall be considered in the order in which they are received.

(d) Applications shall be filed by November 1 and shall be complete by December 1 of each calendar year. Any application that is filed after November 1 or that is not complete on December 1 shall be considered to be

filed during the following calendar year.

(4) After approval, the taxpayer and the Tax Commissioner shall enter into a written agreement. The taxpayer shall agree to complete the project, and the Tax Commissioner, on behalf of the State of Nebraska, shall designate the approved plans of the taxpayer as a project and, in consideration of the taxpayer's agreement, agree to allow the taxpayer to use the incentives contained in the Nebraska Advantage Rural Development Act up to the total amount that were authorized by the Tax Commissioner at the time of approval. The application, and all supporting documentation, to the extent approved, shall be considered a part of the agreement. The agreement shall state:

- (a) The levels of employment and investment required by the act for the project;
- (b) The time period under the act in which the required level must be met;
- (c) The documentation the taxpayer will need to supply when claiming an incentive under the act;
- (d) The date the application was filed; and
- (e) The maximum amount of credits authorized.

Sec. 18. Section 77-4104, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

77-4104 (1) In order to utilize the incentives set forth in the Employment and Investment Growth Act, the taxpayer shall file an application for an agreement with the Tax Commissioner.

(2) The application shall contain:

- (a) A written statement describing the plan of employment and investment for a qualified business in this state;
- (b) Sufficient documents, plans, and specifications as required by the Tax Commissioner to support the plan and to define a project;
- (c) If more than one location within this state is involved, sufficient documentation to show that the employment and investment at different locations are interdependent parts of the plan. A headquarters shall be presumed to be interdependent with any other location directly controlled by such headquarters. A showing that the parts of the plan would be considered parts of a unitary business for corporate income tax purposes shall not be sufficient to show interdependence for the purposes of this subdivision;
- (d) A nonrefundable application fee of five hundred dollars. The fee shall be deposited into the Employment and Investment Growth Nebraska Incentives Fund; ~~which fund is hereby created. Any money in the fund available for investment shall be invested by the state investment officer pursuant to the Nebraska Capital Expansion Act and the Nebraska State Funds Investment Act;~~ and
- (e) A timetable showing the expected sales tax refunds and what year they are expected to be claimed. The timetable shall include both direct refunds due to investment and credits taken as sales tax refunds as accurately as possible.

The application and all supporting information shall be confidential except for the name of the taxpayer, the location of the project, the amounts of increased employment and investment, and the information required to be reported by sections 77-4110 and 77-4113.

(3) Once satisfied that the plan in the application defines a project consistent with the purposes stated in section 77-4102 in one or more qualified business activities within this state, that the plans will result in either (a) the investment in qualified property of at least three million dollars and the hiring of at least thirty new employees or (b) the investment in qualified property resulting in a net gain in the total value of tangible property in this state of a type subject to depreciation, amortization, or other recovery under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 of at least twenty million dollars, and that the required levels of employment and investment for the project will be met prior to the end of the sixth year after the year in which the application was submitted, the Tax Commissioner shall approve the application. In determining the net gain in value for purposes of this subsection, all tangible personal property shall be valued in a manner consistent with the value determined for qualified property, and the total value on the last day of each year shall be compared with the total value on the last day of the base year.

(4) After approval, the taxpayer and the Tax Commissioner shall enter into a written agreement. The taxpayer shall agree to complete the project, and the Tax Commissioner, on behalf of the State of Nebraska, shall designate the approved plans of the taxpayer as a project and, in consideration of the taxpayer's agreement, agree to allow the taxpayer to use the incentives contained in the Employment and Investment Growth Act. The

application, and all supporting documentation, to the extent approved, shall be considered a part of the agreement. The agreement shall state:

- (a) The levels of employment and investment required by the act for the project;
- (b) The time period under the act in which the required levels must be met;
- (c) The documentation the taxpayer will need to supply when claiming an incentive under the act;
- (d) The date the application was filed; and
- (e) A requirement that the company update the Department of Revenue annually on any changes in plans or circumstances which affect the timetable of sales tax refunds as set out in the application. If the company fails to comply with this requirement, the Tax Commissioner may defer any pending sales tax refunds until the company does comply.

(5) The incentives contained in section 77-4105 shall be in lieu of the tax credits allowed by section 77-27,188 for any project. In computing credits under section 77-27,188, any investment or employment which is eligible for benefits under the Employment and Investment Growth Act shall be subtracted from the increases computed for determining the credits under section 77-27,188.

(6) A taxpayer and the Tax Commissioner may enter into agreements for more than one project and may include more than one project in a single agreement. The projects may be either sequential or concurrent. A project may involve the same location as another project. No new employment or new investment shall be included in more than one project for either the meeting of the employment or investment requirements or the creation of credits. When projects overlap and the plans do not clearly specify, then the taxpayer shall specify in which project the employment and investment belongs.

Sec. 19. Section 77-4928, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

77-4928 (1) In order for the employee and company to be eligible for the wage benefit credit, the company shall file an application for an agreement with the board.

(2) The application shall contain:

- (a) The exact name of the company and any related companies which will be included in the project;
- (b) A statement describing, in detail, the nature of the company's business, including the products sold and respective markets;
- (c) A detailed narrative that describes the proposed project, including how the company intends to attain and maintain the job and investment requirements;
- (d) A request that the company be considered for approval under the Quality Jobs Act;
- (e) If more than one location within this state is to be involved in the project, sufficient documentation to show that the employment and investment at the different locations are interdependent parts of the project plan;
- (f) A copy of the corporate authorization for the project;
- (g) A copy of the company's most recent financial report, federal income tax return, Nebraska income tax return, Nebraska reconciliation of income tax withheld, and Nebraska sales and use tax identification number;
- (h) The number of base-year employees, the expected number of new employees, the expected timing of the hiring of the new employees, the anticipated timing and amounts of new investment in buildings and equipment, and the average salaries expected by category for the new employees to be employed at the project; and

(i) A five-thousand-dollar nonrefundable application fee payable to the Department of Revenue. The fee shall be remitted to the Quality Jobs Nebraska Incentives Fund, which fund is created. ~~Any money in the fund available for investment shall be invested by the state investment officer pursuant to the Nebraska Capital Expansion Act and the Nebraska State Funds Investment Act.~~

(3) The application and all supporting information shall be confidential except for the name of the company, the location of the project, the amounts of increased employment and investment, the result of the net benefit calculations, and whether the application has been approved.

(4) The board shall determine whether to approve the company's application by majority vote based on its determination as to whether the project will sufficiently help enable the state to accomplish the purposes of the Quality Jobs Act. The board shall be governed by and shall take into consideration all of the following factors in making its determination:

- (a) The timing, number, wage levels, employee benefit package, and

types of new jobs to be created by the project;

(b) The type of industry in which the company and the project would be engaged;

(c) The timing, amount, and types of investment in qualified property to be made at the project; and

(d) Whether the board believes the project would occur in this state regardless of whether the application was approved.

(5) The board shall notify the company in writing as to whether it has approved or not approved the application. The board shall decide and mail such notice within thirty days after receipt of the application whether it approves or disapproves the application, unless such time is extended by mutual written consent of the board and the company.

(6) A project shall be considered eligible under the act and may be approved by the board only if the application defines a project consistent with the legislative purposes contained in section 77-4902 in one or more qualified business activities within this state that will result in (a) the investment in qualified property of at least fifty million dollars and the hiring of a number of new employees of at least five hundred or (b) the investment in qualified property of at least one hundred million dollars and the hiring of a number of new employees of at least two hundred fifty. The new investment and employment shall occur within seven years, meaning by the end of the sixth year after the end of the year the application was filed, and shall be maintained for the entire entitlement period. These thresholds shall constitute the required levels of employment and investment for purposes of the act.

(7) If the project application is approved by the board, the company and the state shall enter into a written agreement, which shall be executed on behalf of the state by the Tax Commissioner. In the agreement the company shall agree to complete the project and the state shall designate the approved plans of the company as a project and, in consideration of the company's agreement, agree to allow the wage benefit credit as provided for in the act. The application, and all supporting documentation, to the extent approved, shall be considered a part of the agreement. The agreement shall contain such terms and conditions as the board shall specify in order to carry out the legislative purposes of the act. The agreement shall contain provisions to allow the Department of Revenue to verify that the required levels of employment have been attained and maintained.

(8) The address of the board shall be the address of the Department of Revenue.

Sec. 20. Section 77-5405, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

77-5405 (1) In order to use the incentives in the Rural Economic Opportunities Act, the taxpayer shall file an application for an agreement with the Tax Commissioner.

(2) The application shall contain:

(a) A written statement describing the plan of employment, wages, and investment for a qualified business in Nebraska;

(b) Sufficient documents, plans, and specifications as required by the Tax Commissioner to support the plan and define a project;

(c) If more than one location within the state is involved, sufficient documentation to show that the employment, wages, and investment at different locations are interdependent parts of the plan. A headquarters shall be presumed to be interdependent with any other location directly controlled by such headquarters. A showing that the parts of the plan would be considered parts of a unitary business for corporate income tax purposes shall not be sufficient to show interdependence for the purposes of this subdivision; and

(d) A nonrefundable application fee of five hundred dollars. The fee shall be deposited into the Rural Economic Opportunities Nebraska Incentives Fund, which is hereby created. ~~Any money in the fund available for investment shall be invested by the state investment officer pursuant to the Nebraska Capital Expansion Act and the Nebraska State Funds Investment Act.~~

The application and all supporting information shall be confidential except for the name, location, and qualification level of approved projects and the information required to be reported by section 77-5412.

(3) The Tax Commissioner shall approve the application only if it satisfactorily meets the following conditions:

(a) Defines a project in one or more qualified business activities in the state;

(b) Shows that the project will result in (i) the hiring of a number of new employees equal to at least one-half of one percent of the labor force in the county or counties in which the project will be located, (ii) the paying of annual wages to the number of new employees that will average at

least the qualifying wage, and (iii) (A) for a county or counties with a labor force greater than three thousand, the investment in qualified property of at least one hundred thousand dollars times one-half of one percent of the labor force in the county or counties in which the project will be located rounded to the nearest whole number or (B) for a county or counties with a labor force of three thousand or less, the investment in qualified property of at least fifty thousand dollars times one-half of one percent of the labor force in the county or counties in which the project will be located rounded to the nearest whole number; and

(c) Contains plans for achieving the required levels of employment, wages, and investment for the project prior to the end of the second year after the year in which the application is submitted and maintaining the required levels of employment, wages, and investment for the entitlement period.

(4) After approval, the taxpayer and Tax Commissioner shall enter into a written agreement. The taxpayer shall agree to complete the project, and the Tax Commissioner, on behalf of the State of Nebraska, shall designate the approved plans of the taxpayer as a project and, in consideration of the taxpayer's agreement, agree to allow the taxpayer to use the incentives contained in the Rural Economic Opportunities Act. The application, and all supporting documentation, to the extent approved, shall be considered a part of the agreement. The agreement shall state:

(a) The levels of employment, wages, and investment required by the act for the project based on the date of the application;

(b) The time period under the act in which the required levels must be met;

(c) The documentation the taxpayer will need to supply when claiming an incentive under the act;

(d) The date the application was filed; and

(e) That the required levels of employment, wages, and investment shall be achieved and maintained throughout the entitlement period or any incentives used will be subject to recapture.

(5) The incentives contained in section 77-5407 shall be in lieu of the tax credits allowed by sections 77-27,188 and 77-4105 for any project. Any employment, wages, or investment which is eligible for credits under the act shall be subtracted from the increases computed for determining the benefits under sections 77-27,188 and 77-4105.

(6) A taxpayer and the Tax Commissioner may enter into agreements for more than one project. The projects may be either sequential or concurrent. A project may involve the same location as another project. No new employment, new wages, or new investment shall be included in more than one project for either the meeting of the employment, wages, or investment requirements or the creation of credits. When projects overlap and the plans do not clearly specify, the taxpayer shall specify in which project the employment, wages, and investment belong.

Sec. 21. Section 77-5534, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

77-5534 (1) In order for the company to be eligible for the wage benefit credit or the investment tax credit, as applicable, the company shall file an application for an agreement with the board.

(2) The application shall contain:

(a) The exact name of the company and any related companies which will be included in the project;

(b) A statement describing, in detail, the nature of the company's business, including the products sold and respective markets;

(c) A detailed narrative that describes the proposed project, including how the company intends to attain and maintain the job and investment requirements and the expected start date for the project;

(d) A request that the company be considered for approval under the Invest Nebraska Act;

(e) If more than one location within this state is to be involved in the project, sufficient documentation to show that the employment and investment at the different locations are interdependent parts of the project plan;

(f) A copy of the company's authorization for the project;

(g) A copy of the company's most recent financial report, federal income tax return, Nebraska income tax return, Nebraska reconciliation of income tax withheld, and Nebraska sales and use tax identification number;

(h) The expected number of base-year employees, the expected number of new employees, the expected timing of the hiring of the new employees, the anticipated timing and amounts of new investment in buildings and equipment, and the average salaries expected by category for the new employees to be

employed at the project;

(i) A copy of the written policy of the company which prohibits the company from requiring as a condition of employment or promotion at the project that an employee or an individual applying for employment at the project submit to a genetic test or provide genetic information outside of the scope of normal blood testing; and

(j) A five-thousand-dollar nonrefundable application fee payable to the Department of Revenue. The fee shall be remitted to the ~~Invest Nebraska Incentives Fund, which fund is created. Any money in the fund available for investment shall be invested by the state investment officer pursuant to the Nebraska Capital Expansion Act and the Nebraska State Funds Investment Act.~~

(3) Any representations made by the company, or the company's representatives, during the meeting before the board shall become a part of the application. The application and all supporting information and information received during a closed session of the board shall be confidential except for the name of the company, the location of the project, the amounts of increased employment and investment, and whether the application has been approved. The confidential information contained in an application shall be discussed only in a closed session of the board, unless the company waives its right to confidentiality in writing. The members of the board will respect the confidentiality of the information received and will not disclose any confidential information regarding the company to any person other than the representatives of the company, the Tax Commissioner, or other employees of the Department of Revenue, except as specifically provided in the Invest Nebraska Act. Any applications, or parts of applications, provided to the members of the board shall be numbered copies and shall be delivered to the offices of the board members in a double envelope. All applications, or parts of applications, shall be returned to the department at the conclusion of the meeting.

Sec. 22. Section 77-5723, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2006, is amended to read:

77-5723 (1) In order to utilize the incentives set forth in the Nebraska Advantage Act, the taxpayer shall file an application, on a form developed by the Tax Commissioner, requesting an agreement with the Tax Commissioner.

(2) The application shall contain:

(a) A written statement describing the plan of employment and investment for a qualified business in this state;

(b) Sufficient documents, plans, and specifications as required by the Tax Commissioner to support the plan and to define a project;

(c) If more than one location within this state is involved, sufficient documentation to show that the employment and investment at different locations are interdependent parts of the plan. A headquarters shall be presumed to be interdependent with each other location directly controlled by such headquarters. A showing that the parts of the plan would be considered parts of a unitary business for corporate income tax purposes shall not be sufficient to show interdependence for the purposes of this subdivision;

(d) A nonrefundable application fee of one thousand dollars for a tier 1 project, two thousand five hundred dollars for a tier 2, tier 3, or tier 5 project, and five thousand dollars for a tier 4 project. The fee shall be credited to the Nebraska Advantage Incentives Fund; and

(e) A timetable showing the expected sales tax refunds and what year they are expected to be claimed. The timetable shall include both direct refunds due to investment and credits taken as sales tax refunds as accurately as possible.

The application and all supporting information shall be confidential except for the name of the taxpayer, the location of the project, the amounts of increased employment and investment, and the information required to be reported by sections 77-5731 and 77-5734.

(3) An application must be complete to establish the date of the application. An application shall be considered complete once it contains the items listed in subsection (2) of this section, regardless of the Tax Commissioner's additional needs pertaining to information or clarification in order to approve or not approve the application.

(4) Once satisfied that the plan in the application defines a project consistent with the purposes stated in the Nebraska Advantage Act in one or more qualified business activities within this state, that the taxpayer and the plan will qualify for benefits under the act, and that the required levels of employment and investment for the project will be met prior to the end of the fourth year after the year in which the application was submitted for a tier 1 or tier 3 project or the end of the sixth year after the year in which the application was submitted for a tier 2, tier 4, or tier 5 project,

the Tax Commissioner shall approve the application.

(5) After approval, the taxpayer and the Tax Commissioner shall enter into a written agreement. The taxpayer shall agree to complete the project, and the Tax Commissioner, on behalf of the State of Nebraska, shall designate the approved plan of the taxpayer as a project and, in consideration of the taxpayer's agreement, agree to allow the taxpayer to use the incentives contained in the Nebraska Advantage Act. The application, and all supporting documentation, to the extent approved, shall be considered a part of the agreement. The agreement shall state:

(a) The levels of employment and investment required by the act for the project;

(b) The time period under the act in which the required levels must be met;

(c) The documentation the taxpayer will need to supply when claiming an incentive under the act;

(d) The date the application was filed; and

(e) A requirement that the company update the Department of Revenue annually on any changes in plans or circumstances which affect the timetable of sales tax refunds as set out in the application. If the company fails to comply with this requirement, the Tax Commissioner may defer any pending sales tax refunds until the company does comply.

(6) The incentives contained in section 77-5725 shall be in lieu of the tax credits allowed by the Nebraska Advantage Rural Development Act for any project. In computing credits under the act, any investment or employment which is eligible for benefits or used in determining benefits under the Nebraska Advantage Act shall be subtracted from the increases computed for determining the credits under section 77-27,188. New investment or employment at a project location that results in the meeting or maintenance of the employment or investment requirements, the creation of credits, or refunds of taxes under the Employment and Investment Growth Act shall not be considered new investment or employment for purposes of the Nebraska Advantage Act. The use of carryover credits under the Employment and Investment Growth Act, the Invest Nebraska Act, the Nebraska Advantage Rural Development Act, or the Quality Jobs Act shall not preclude investment and employment from being considered new investment or employment under the Nebraska Advantage Act. The use of property tax exemptions at the project under the Employment and Investment Growth Act shall not preclude investment not eligible for the property tax exemption from being considered new investment under the Nebraska Advantage Act.

(7) A taxpayer and the Tax Commissioner may enter into agreements for more than one project and may include more than one project in a single agreement. The projects may be either sequential or concurrent. A project may involve the same location as another project. No new employment or new investment shall be included in more than one project for either the meeting of the employment or investment requirements or the creation of credits. When projects overlap and the plans do not clearly specify, then the taxpayer shall specify in which project the employment or investment belongs.

Sec. 23. Section 77-5726, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2006, is amended to read:

77-5726 (1)(a) The credits prescribed in section 77-5725 shall be established by filing the forms required by the Tax Commissioner with the income tax return for the year. The credits may be used and shall be applied in the order in which they were first allowed. The credits may be used after any other nonrefundable credits to reduce the taxpayer's income tax liability imposed by sections 77-2714 to 77-27,135. Any decision on how part of the credit is applied shall not limit how the remaining credit could be applied under this section.

(b) The taxpayer may use the credit provided in subsection (3) of section 77-5725 to reduce the taxpayer's income tax withholding employer or payor tax liability under section 77-2756 or 77-2757 to the extent such liability is attributable to the number of new employees at the project. To the extent of the credit used, such withholding shall not constitute public funds or state tax revenue and shall not constitute a trust fund or be owned by the state. The use by the taxpayer of the credit shall not change the amount that otherwise would be reported by the taxpayer to the employee under section 77-2754 as income tax withheld and shall not reduce the amount that otherwise would be allowed by the state as a refundable credit on an employee's income tax return as income tax withheld under section 77-2755.

The amount of credits used against income tax withholding shall not exceed the withholding attributable to new employees at the project. If the amount of credit used by the taxpayer against income tax withholding exceeds this amount, the excess withholding shall be returned to the Department of

Revenue in the manner provided in section 77-2756, such excess amount returned shall be considered unused, and the amount of unused credits may be used as otherwise permitted in this section or shall carry over to the extent authorized in subdivision (1)(d) of this section.

(c) Credits may be used to obtain a refund of sales and use taxes under the Local Option Revenue Act, the Nebraska Revenue Act of 1967, and sections 13-319, 13-324, and 13-2813 which are not otherwise refundable that are paid on purchases, including rentals, for use at the project.

(d) Credits may be carried over until fully utilized, except that such credits may not be carried over more than nine years after the year of application for a tier 1 or tier 3 project or fourteen years after the year of application for a tier 2 or tier 4 project.

(2)(a) No refund claims shall be filed until after the required levels of employment and investment have been met.

(b) Refund claims shall be filed no more than once each quarter for refunds under the Nebraska Advantage Act, except that any claim for a refund in excess of twenty-five thousand dollars may be filed at any time.

(c) Any refund claim for sales and use taxes on materials incorporated into real estate as a part of the project shall be filed by and the refund paid to the owner of the improvement to real estate. A refund claim for such materials purchased by a purchasing agent shall include a copy of the purchasing agent appointment, the contract price, and a certification by the contractor or repairperson of the percentage of the materials incorporated into the project on which sales and use taxes were paid to Nebraska after appointment as purchasing agent.

(d) All refund claims shall be filed, processed, and allowed as any other claim under section 77-2708, except that the amounts allowed to be refunded under the Nebraska Advantage Act shall be deemed to be overpayments and shall be refunded notwithstanding any limitation in subdivision (2)(a) of section 77-2708. The refund may be allowed if the claim is filed within three calendar years from the end of the year the required levels of employment and investment are met or within the period set forth in section 77-2708.

(e) If a claim for a refund of sales and use taxes under the Local Option Revenue Act or sections 13-319, 13-324, and 13-2813 of more than twenty-five thousand dollars is filed by June 15 of a given year, the refund shall be made on or after November 15 of the same year. If such a claim is filed on or after June 16 of a given year, the refund shall not be made until on or after November 15 of the following year. The Tax Commissioner shall notify the affected city, village, county, or municipal county of the amount of refund claims of sales and use taxes under the Local Option Revenue Act or sections 13-319, 13-324, and 13-2813 that are in excess of twenty-five thousand dollars on or before July 1 of the year before the claims will be paid under this section.

(f) Interest shall not be allowed on any sales and use taxes refunded under the Nebraska Advantage Act.

(3) The appointment of purchasing agents shall be recognized for the purpose of changing the status of a contractor or repairperson as the ultimate consumer of tangible personal property purchased after the date of the appointment which is physically incorporated into the project and becomes the property of the owner of the improvement to real estate. The purchasing agent shall be jointly liable for the payment of the sales and use tax on the purchases with the owner of the improvement to real estate.

(4) A determination that a taxpayer is not engaged in a qualified business or has failed to meet or maintain the required levels of employment or investment for incentives, exemptions, or recapture may be protested to the Tax Commissioner within thirty days after the written determination by the Department of Revenue. The Tax Commissioner shall issue a written order resolving such protests. The determination of the Tax Commissioner within sixty days after the mailing of the written notice of the proposed determination. If the notice of proposed determination is not protested within the sixty-day period, the proposed determination is a final determination. If the notice is protested, the Tax Commissioner shall issue a written order resolving such protests. The written order of the Tax Commissioner resolving a protest may be appealed to the district court of Lancaster County within thirty days after the issuance of the order.

Sec. 24. The Nebraska Incentives Fund is created. Any money in the Employment and Investment Growth Fund, the Invest Nebraska Fund, the Nebraska Advantage Fund, the Nebraska Advantage Rural Development Fund, the Quality Jobs Fund, or the Rural Economic Opportunities Fund, on the operative date of this section shall be transferred by the State Treasurer to the Nebraska Incentives Fund. Any money in the fund available for investment shall be invested by the state investment officer pursuant to the Nebraska Capital

Expansion Act and the Nebraska State Funds Investment Act.

Sec. 25. Section 79-1034, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

79-1034 The county treasurer shall collect or cause to be collected the fines and all money for school purposes in his or her county and take all proper measures to secure to each district its full amount of school funds. All county treasurers shall report to the State Treasurer ~~and Tax Commissioner~~ semiannually, on or before the third Monday of April and the first Monday of November, ~~and at such other times as the Tax Commissioner may require,~~ a statement showing the whole amount of money collected on behalf of school districts from all sources, noting the interest separately, and the amount received on account of licenses and fines and from all other sources from which school funds are derived, together with a statement showing the amount paid out, to whom, and on what account. At the same time the county treasurer shall pay over to the State Treasurer all funds and money, from whatever source derived, belonging to the general school fund in his or her hands and make a settlement thereof with the State Treasurer.

Sec. 26. Sections 1, 8, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, and 29 of this act become operative on their effective date. Sections 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 23, and 28 of this act become operative on January 1, 2009.

Sec. 27. Original sections 77-2792, 77-4104, 77-4928, 77-5405, 77-5534, and 79-1034, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, sections 21-2612 and 77-5723, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2006, and sections 77-2711 and 77-27,187.02, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2007, are repealed.

Sec. 28. Original sections 66-723, 77-1783.01, 77-2709, 77-2777, 77-2778, 77-2780, 77-2793, 77-2796, and 77-27,100, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, and sections 66-720, 66-722, 66-1344, 77-2775, and 77-5726, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2006, are repealed.

Sec. 29. The following section is outright repealed: Section 77-5732, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2006.