

Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB)

Statutory Authority

The Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB) is authorized by RCW 43.160 and was created in 1982. In 2008, SB 6855 made noteworthy changes that will go into effect July 1, 2009.

What is CERB?

CERB provides low-interest loans and grants to local governments and federally recognized Indian tribes to finance public infrastructure projects that are expected to boost economic development and create or retain jobs in communities. CERB has \$20 million for projects in 2007-2009. CERB is also responsible for administering the Job Development Fund Program (created by the legislature in 2005 and ends in 2009) and the Local Infrastructure Financing Tool (LIFT). CERB is staffed by the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (CTED.)

CERB Membership

The 20-person board consists of a diversity of members from both the public and private sectors across the state. The board consists of one person from each of the major caucuses in the House of Representatives and Senate; a recognized private or public sector economist; one port district official; one county official; one city official; one representative of a federally recognized Indian tribe; one representative of the public; four representatives of small businesses from across the state; one executive from large businesses each from the area west of the Cascades and the area east of the Cascades. The chair of the board is selected by the governor. The director of CTED, the director of revenue, the commissioner of employment security, and the secretary of transportation are non-voting advisory members of the board. Board members serve for 3-year terms.

Project Approval Guidelines

The CERB board is directed to spend 75 percent of available funding on projects in rural communities. In 2009, this allocation changes to be 75 percent of the first \$20 million available in a biennium for rural communities and then 50 percent of any additional funding. Currently, at least ten percent of funding is directed towards native communities; in 2009 this will change to no more than 25 percent. CERB financing is available for development of land and improvements for public facilities including planning, construction, rehabilitation, alteration, and expansion or improvement of the facilities. The CERB financing is used to either bring a new business into a community or expand or retain an existing business that is already located in the community without displacing other already established businesses.

In the future projects will require creation of significant private sector jobs or capital investment; local involvement, local political approval, and local matching funds; be consistent with the state comprehensive economic development plan; and create jobs providing wages that exceed the countywide median hourly wage.

Biennial Report

Every even numbered year the board will conduct outcome-based evaluations on its projects and provide its draft evaluation to the Washington State Economic Development Commission for review and comment and then submit a complete evaluation to the governor and Legislature by December 31, starting in 2010.