

County OKs economic zone for North Brevard

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VIERA — A red-shirted brigade swarmed the Brevard County Commission on Tuesday, armed with facts and fears about the potential impact an economic development zone in North Brevard would have on their tax bills.

They faced a legion of suits equipped with statistics supporting the notion the tax district would attract business and benefit all county residents.

After five hours of testimony from 48 people, the county commission had a brief discussion before voting 3-2 for the zone — with commissioners Andy Anderson and Trudi Infantini voting against it.

With unemployment in the north end of the county higher than 12

9-13-11 percent and thousands set to be laid off now that NASA's shuttle program is ending, Commission Chairman Robin Fisher said the board had to act fast.

"Nobody else is going to save us," said Fisher, who represents North Brevard.

The ordinance establishes a tax increment on all new commercial and industrial development north of State Road 528. During the first five years, 90 percent of the revenue from all new construction goes into the special district to spend on incentives to lure businesses.

County budget office projections show \$2.9 million going into the district fund after five years, with \$6.8 million going to the county's general fund. ■

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