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## Foreign trade zone expansion urged

*By Jana M. Russell*

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The alternative site framework for Gregg County's foreign trade zone should allow more local companies to take advantage of the program, a Missouri attorney told a local group Tuesday.

With an alternative site framework in place, companies do not have to be located in a foreign trade zone to receive the benefits — only in the county that has the designation.



Les Hassell/News-Journal Photo

[\(ENLARGE\)](#)

Attorney Scott Taylor speaks at the Foreign Trade Zone Seminar Tuesday, at the East Texas Regional Airport. Taylor is a lawyer with the Kansas City firm of Miller & Co. the only law firm in the U.S. with a practice devoted exclusively to foreign trade zone issues.

“Foreign trade zones strengthen American companies and the nation's economy by creating incentives to keep manufacturing and distributing jobs in the United States,” Scott Taylor said.

Taylor is a lawyer with the Kansas City firm of Miller & Co. the only law firm in the U.S. with a practice devoted exclusively to foreign trade zone issues. He spoke to about 25 people at a free seminar at the East Texas Regional Airport.

Foreign trade zones are located in the U.S.; but, for customs purposes, the zones are treated as if they are in foreign countries. The zones allows companies to delay or defer customs duties, providing for a better cash flow and less red tape, he said. Gregg County is the first foreign trade zone in the U.S. to operate under an alternative

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site framework, which streamlines the paperwork and time frame necessary for companies to get designated as a foreign trade zone. Companies should be able to get their applications approved within 30 days under the new rules, Taylor said.

“Although companies will eventually pay customs duties on these products if they're offered for sale in the United States, there are sometimes lower duties for finished products than raw materials,” he said. In the past 40 years, foreign trade zones have grown from 10 in 1970 to 273 in 2010, he said.