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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-SECOND SESSION

H. F. No. 2597

05/06/2021 Authored by Nelson, N., The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Agriculture Finance and Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to food; appropriating money for grocery safety procedures, food access,
1.3 and sustainable retail food access; requiring reports.

1.4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.5 Section 1. RETAIL FOOD HANDLERS; FOOD ACCESS GRANTS.

1.6 Subdivision 1. Grocery safety procedures grants. (a) \$250,000 in fiscal year 2021 is
1.7 appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner of agriculture for grants to retail
1.8 food handlers, as described in Minnesota Statutes, section 28A.05, paragraph (a). The
1.9 commissioner may award grants for recipients to execute requirements, guidance, and
1.10 recommendations related to the infectious disease known as COVID-19 provided by the
1.11 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Department of Health and to develop
1.12 safety procedures, update and retrofit retail locations, purchase personal protective equipment
1.13 for employees, and educate the public on the need to follow safety procedures. Grants under
1.14 this subdivision equal \$1,000 for stores that qualify as retail food handlers. The commissioner
1.15 must not award a business with multiple eligible locations more than \$5,000 in total grants.
1.16 Applicants must provide information to the commissioner on how grant money will be used
1.17 to ensure safety of Minnesotans from COVID-19. The is a onetime appropriation and is
1.18 available until June 30, 2022.

1.19 Subd. 2. Food access grants. \$500,000 in fiscal year 2021 is appropriated from the
1.20 general fund to the commissioner of agriculture for a grant to the Minnesota Grocers
1.21 Association to assist retail food handlers, as described in Minnesota Statutes, section 28A.05,
1.22 paragraph (a), in providing food access to communities. The Minnesota Grocers Association
1.23 must provide grants to retail food handlers for expenses relating to curbside grocery pickup,

2.1 in-store grocery pickup, and grocery delivery. To be eligible for grant money under this
2.2 subdivision, expenses related to curbside grocery pickup, in-store grocery pickup, or grocery
2.3 delivery must have occurred on or after March 13, 2020. Expenses eligible for grant
2.4 assistance under this subdivision include expenses related to coolers, freezers, shelving,
2.5 information technology equipment, or any equipment needed to administer grocery pickup
2.6 or grocery delivery services. The Minnesota Grocers Association may issue grants of \$5,000
2.7 for stores that qualify as retail food handlers. The Minnesota Grocers Association must not
2.8 award a business with multiple eligible locations more than \$20,000 in total grants.
2.9 Applicants for grants under this subdivision must provide information to the Minnesota
2.10 Grocers Association on (1) expenditures made related to curbside grocery pickup, in-store
2.11 grocery pickup, and grocery delivery services and how the grant money will be used to
2.12 cover those costs, or (2) planned expenditures needed to continue providing food access to
2.13 communities. This is a onetime appropriation and is available until June 30, 2022. The
2.14 Minnesota Grocers Association must report by February 15, 2023, to the legislative
2.15 committees with jurisdiction over agriculture finance and policy on grant activity authorized
2.16 under this subdivision, including information on grant recipients and grant awards.

2.17 Subd. 3. **Sustainable retail food access grants.** \$1,000,000 in fiscal year 2021 is
2.18 appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner of agriculture for a grant to the
2.19 Minnesota Grocers Association to assist retail food handlers, as described in Minnesota
2.20 Statutes, section 28A.05, paragraph (a), in building a sustainable retail food infrastructure
2.21 system through partnerships between retail food handlers and local hunger organizations,
2.22 schools, and other nonprofits. Retail food handlers must use the grant money to develop
2.23 infrastructure to provide food items from grocery stores to local food shelves and nonprofits
2.24 to feed individuals and communities that lack sustainable access to a stable food supply.
2.25 For purposes of this subdivision, the Minnesota Grocers Association may only award grants
2.26 to retail food handlers in an amount up to but not exceeding \$10,000. Applicants for grants
2.27 under this subdivision must provide the Minnesota Grocers Association information on how
2.28 the grant money will be used and with what local organizations the store is partnering. This
2.29 is a onetime appropriation and is available until June 30, 2022. The Minnesota Grocers
2.30 Association must report by February 15, 2023, to the legislative committees with jurisdiction
2.31 over agriculture finance and policy on grant activity authorized under this subdivision,
2.32 including information on grant recipients and awards.

2.33 Subd. 4. **Federal money.** The commissioner of management and budget must determine
2.34 whether the appropriations authorized under this section are eligible uses of federal funding
2.35 received from the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund or any other federal money

- 3.1 received by the state under the American Rescue Plan Act, Public Law 117-2. If the
3.2 commissioner of management and budget determines an expense is eligible for funding
3.3 under Public Law 117-2, the amount of the eligible expense is appropriated from the account
3.4 where those amounts have been deposited and the corresponding general fund amounts
3.5 appropriated under this section are canceled to the general fund.