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State of Minnesota  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

EIGHTY-NINTH SESSION

**H. F. No. 777**

02/12/2015 Authored by Hamilton, Bernardy, Daniels, Halverson, Nornes and others  
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Higher Education Policy and Finance  
03/05/2015 Adoption of Report: Re-referred to the Committee on Government Operations and Elections Policy  
03/12/2015 Adoption of Report: Amended and re-referred to the Committee on Higher Education Policy and Finance

1.1 A bill for an act  
1.2 relating to higher education; creating a grant program for spinal cord injury and  
1.3 traumatic brain injury research; establishing the spinal cord and traumatic brain  
1.4 injury advisory council; appropriating money; proposing coding for new law  
1.5 in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 136A.

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

1.7 Section 1. **[136A.901] SPINAL CORD INJURY AND TRAUMATIC BRAIN**  
1.8 **INJURY RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAM.**

1.9 Subdivision 1. **Grant program.** The commissioner shall establish a grant program  
1.10 to award grants to institutions in Minnesota for research into spinal cord injuries and  
1.11 traumatic brain injuries. Grants shall be awarded to conduct research into new and  
1.12 innovative treatments and rehabilitative efforts for the functional improvement of people  
1.13 with spinal cord and traumatic brain injuries. Research topics may include, but are not  
1.14 limited to, pharmaceutical, medical device, brain stimulus, and rehabilitative approaches  
1.15 and techniques. The commissioner, in consultation with the advisory council established  
1.16 under section 136A.907, shall award 40 percent of the grant funds for research involving  
1.17 spinal cord injuries, 40 percent to research involving traumatic brain injuries, and 20  
1.18 percent to the small business grant and loan program established in subdivision 2.

1.19 Subd. 2. **Small business grant and loan program.** A program to provide  
1.20 grants and loans to small businesses conducting research on innovative treatments and  
1.21 rehabilitative efforts for the functional improvement of people with spinal cord and  
1.22 traumatic brain injuries is established to provide phase I and phase II research for these  
1.23 conditions. Phase I research is to establish the technical merit, feasibility, and commercial  
1.24 potential of the proposed research and research and development efforts and to determine  
1.25 the quality of performance. Phase II is research to continue the research and research and

development efforts initiated in phase I. Funding for phase II shall be based on the results achieved in phase I and the scientific and technical merit and commercial potential of the project proposed in phase II. A business is a "small business" if the business, including its affiliates, has no more than 500 employees.

Subd. 3. **Report.** By January 15, 2016, and each January 15 thereafter, the commissioner shall submit a report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the senate and house of representatives committees having jurisdiction over the Office of Higher Education, specifying the institutions receiving grants under this section and the purposes for which the grant funds were used.

Sec. 2. **[136A.907] SPINAL CORD AND TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY  
ADVISORY COUNCIL.**

Subdivision 1. **Membership.** The commissioner shall appoint a 12-member Spinal Cord and Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Council consisting of:

- (1) one member representing the University of Minnesota Medical School;
- (2) one member representing the Mayo Medical School;
- (3) one member representing the Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Center;
- (4) one member representing Hennepin County Medical Center;
- (5) one member who is a neurosurgeon;
- (6) one member who has a spinal cord injury;
- (7) one member who is a family member of a person with a spinal cord injury;
- (8) one member who has a traumatic brain injury;
- (9) one member who is a family member of a person with a traumatic brain injury;
- (10) one member who is a physician specializing in the treatment of spinal cord injury;
- (11) one member who is a physician specializing in the treatment of traumatic brain injury; and
- (12) one member who is a rehabilitative specialist.

Subd. 2. **Organization.** The advisory council shall be organized and administered under section 15.059, except that subdivision 2 shall not apply. Except as provided in subdivision 4, the commissioner shall appoint council members to two-year terms and appoint one member as chair.

Subd. 3. **First appointments and first meeting.** The commissioner shall appoint the first members of the council by September 1, 2015. The chair shall convene the first meeting by November 1, 2015.

Subd. 4. **Terms of initial council members.** The commissioner shall designate six of the initial council members to serve one-year terms and six to serve two-year terms.

3.1            Subd. 5. **Conflict of interest.** Council members must disclose in a written statement  
3.2            any financial interest in any organization that the council recommends to receive a grant.  
3.3            The written statement must accompany the grant recommendations and must explain  
3.4            the nature of the conflict.

3.5            Subd. 6. **Duties.** The advisory council shall:

3.6            (1) develop criteria for evaluating and awarding the research grants under section  
3.7            136A.901;

3.8            (2) review research proposals and make recommendations by January 15 of each  
3.9            year to the director for purposes of awarding grants under section 136A.901; and

3.10           (3) perform other duties as authorized by the commissioner.

3.11           Subd. 7. **Staffing.** The commissioner shall provide administrative support to the  
3.12           council to perform its duties.

3.13           Sec. 3. **APPROPRIATION.**

3.14           \$..... for fiscal year 2016 and \$..... for fiscal year 2017 are appropriated from  
3.15           the general fund to the commissioner of the Minnesota Office of Higher Education  
3.16           for the grants authorized in section 1. \$..... of the appropriation may be used by the  
3.17           commissioner to administer the grant program under section 1.