This Document can be made available
in alternative formats upon request

State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-FOURTH SESSION

H. F. No. 1948

03/05/2025 Authored by Sencer-Mura; Smith; Her; Lee, F., and Hicks
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Workforce, Labor, and Economic Development Finance and Policy

A bill for an act

relating to economic development; establishing a headwaters community food and water economic resiliency program; appropriating money; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 116J.

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

Section 1. **[116J.544] HEADWATERS COMMUNITY FOOD AND WATER ECONOMIC RESILIENCY PROGRAM.**

Subdivision 1. **Definitions.** (a) For purposes of this section, the following terms have the meanings given.

(b) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of employment and economic development.

(c) "Regenerative food web" means a decentralized, coordinated system for managing energy regeneratively in every component of a locally adapted food economy from source to table that is designed to be inclusive, create capacity for health and well-being, foster a culture of caring, and recognize the fundamental interdependent relationship of people and nature.

Subd. 2. **Program; purpose.** The commissioner must administer a headwaters community food and water economic resiliency program. The purpose of the program is to facilitate the establishment and maintenance of local and regional regenerative food webs to address in a sustainable manner the enduring challenges of food, water, and climate. The commissioner must develop and administer the program in consultation with the advisory committee established under subdivision 4.

Subd. 3. **Methods.** (a) The commissioner must achieve the purpose in subdivision 1 through multiple methods, including but not limited to:

(1) provide financial and technical assistance for urban and rural producers engaged in organic, regenerative food systems to year-round operations to respond to demands for dependable food supply chains in the face of unpredictable weather and to normalize access to affordable, culturally relevant, locally produced, fresh, prepared, and preserved food sources daily in schools and communities;

(2) provide financial and technical assistance for physical infrastructure including:

(i) facilities for aggregation, storage, composting, greenhouses, seed saving, weather-resilient water management systems, and research;

(ii) marketing and distribution sites, including neighborhood food commons and kitchens equipped for food preparation and preservation; and

(iii) support for existing hubs and learning centers;

(3) provide financial and technical assistance for operational infrastructure in every component of the food web including:

(i) production, preparation, and preservation;

(ii) neighborhood based food commons;

(iii) reusable storage, distribution and waste elimination systems;

(iv) emergency preparation and recovery operations;

(v) aggregation, delivery, distribution, and storage systems designed to be responsive to daily and seasonal needs that removes a grower's and producer's responsibility for transporting harvests to market sites;

(vi) leadership training and network facilitation; and

(vii) local and regional partnerships necessary to support regenerative food web operations;

(4) provide financial and technical assistance to advance the revival of food cultures defined by Black people, Indigenous people, and people of color;

(5) provide funding for long-term holistic, in-situ research throughout the regenerative food web to utilize and document local ecological knowledge, conduct seed and plant exchange, and establish perennial, weather-resilient landscapes to restore vital biological diversity and ground water;

(6) provide a financial investment fund to offer training and establish new members of the food web, including regenerative growers and teams of skilled culinary staff of all racial identities, including community members who identify as Black, Indigenous, and people of color, to participate as employees in the food web economy including individual, cooperative, and small-scale operations; and

(7) provide affordable and accessible health care for every member of the food web economy to ensure that the system is economically robust and can operate effectively.

(b) The commissioner shall establish a fund to make fruits and vegetables affordable for all income levels.

Subd. 4. **Advisory committee.** (a) The Headwaters Community Food and Water Economic Resiliency Advisory Committee is established and consists of persons from urban and rural communities who represent the following groups, as appointed by the commissioner of employment and economic development: local regenerative and organic farmers, neighborhood food hubs, cooperatives, culinary schools, local food restaurateurs, community organizers, food council members, system managers, scientists, researchers, students, and public health officials. Members may be employed in the web economy and must include leaders who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color.

The commissioner may remove members and fill vacancies as provided in section 15.059, subdivision 4.

(b) The advisory committee must advise the commissioner regarding the establishment and operation of the headwaters community food and water economic resiliency program, including but not limited to program criteria, eligibility guidelines, application processes, monitoring and accountability mechanisms, leveraging additional public and private investments, and promoting the program statewide.

(c) The commissioner must convene the advisory committee at least two times per year to perform the committee's duties.

(d) The commissioner must provide staffing, meeting space, and administrative services for the advisory committee.

(e) The commissioner or the commissioner's designee is the chair of the committee.

(f) Public members of the advisory committee serve without compensation or payment of expenses.

(g) The advisory committee does not expire.

Sec. 2. **APPROPRIATION.**

$..... in fiscal year 2026 and $..... in fiscal year 2027 are appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner of employment and economic development for purposes of the headwaters community food and water economic resiliency program in Minnesota Statutes, section 116J.544.