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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-FOURTH SESSION

H. F. No. 2518

03/20/2025 Authored by Kotyza-Witthuhn, Baker, Greene, Gillman, Kozlowski and others
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; appropriating money for a grant to WomenVenture; requiring a report.

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

Section 1. **APPROPRIATION.**

(a) $8,000,000 in fiscal year 2026 is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner of employment and economic development for a grant to WomenVenture to:

(1) support child care providers through business training and shared services programs and to create materials that may be used, at no cost to child care providers, for start-up, expansion, and operation of child care businesses statewide, with the goal of helping new and existing child care businesses in underserved areas of the state become profitable and sustainable; and

(2) support business expansion for women food entrepreneurs throughout Minnesota's food supply chain to help stabilize and strengthen their business operations, create distribution networks, offer technical assistance and support to women entrepreneurs in agribusiness, develop business plans, develop a workforce, research expansion strategies, and for other related activities.

(b) Eligible uses of the money include but are not limited to:

(1) leasehold improvements;

(2) additions, alterations, remodeling, or renovations to rented space;

(3) emergency grant funding for damage caused by natural disasters;

(4) inventory or supplies;

(5) machinery or equipment purchases;

(6) working capital; and

(7) debt refinancing.

(c) Money distributed to entrepreneurs may be loans, forgivable loans, and grants. Of this amount, up to five percent may be used for WomenVenture's technical assistance and administrative costs. This is a onetime appropriation and is available until June 30, 2028.

(d) By December 15, 2028, WomenVenture must submit a report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over agriculture and employment and economic development. The report must include a summary of the uses of the appropriation, including the amount of the appropriation used for administration. The report must also provide a breakdown of the amount of funding used for loans, forgivable loans, and grants; information about the terms of the loans issued; a discussion of how money from repaid loans will be used; the number of entrepreneurs assisted; and a breakdown of how many entrepreneurs received assistance in each county.