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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETIETH SESSION

H. F. No. 846

02/06/2017 Authored by Albright, Hamilton, Allen, Lohmer, Halverson and others
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Health and Human Services Reform
03/15/2017 Adoption of Report: Re-referred to the Committee on Health and Human Services Finance

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to human services; establishing the unlocking opportunities grant program;
1.3 requiring a report; appropriating money; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota
1.4 Statutes, chapter 256K.

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

1.6 Section 1. 256K.50 UNLOCKING OPPORTUNITIES GRANT PROGRAM.

1.7 Subdivision 1. Grant program established. (a) The commissioner of human services
1.8 shall establish the unlocking opportunities grant program and award grants to providers
1.9 committed to and capable of serving locked-out individuals with community-based housing
1.10 services.

1.11 (b) The unlocking opportunities grant program is created to serve locked-out individuals,
1.12 particularly African American men and people of color, who experience violence, poverty,
1.13 homelessness, and incarceration, and are without access to needed resources.

1.14 (c) The purpose of the unlocking opportunities grant program is to provide
1.15 community-based housing services to increase locked-out individuals' access to stable
1.16 housing and employment; improve the individuals' mental and physical well-being; and
1.17 reduce recidivism.

1.18 Subd. 2. Definitions. (a) For purposes of this section, the following terms have the
1.19 meanings given them.

1.20 (b) "At risk of being homeless" means a person whose status or circumstances indicate
1.21 a significant danger of experiencing homelessness in the future.

1.22 (c) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of human services.

2.1 (d) "Homeless" means a person who is without shelter, or who lacks a fixed, regular,  
2.2 and adequate nighttime residence. A homeless person is not a person incarcerated or  
2.3 otherwise detained under federal or state law. The following are not fixed, regular, or  
2.4 adequate nighttime residences:

2.5 (1) a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary  
2.6 living accommodations;

2.7 (2) an institution or a publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary  
2.8 living accommodations;

2.9 (3) a temporary placement with a peer, friend, or family member that has not offered  
2.10 permanent residence, a residential lease, or temporary lodging for more than 30 days; or

2.11 (4) a public or private place not designed for, nor ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping  
2.12 accommodation for human beings.

2.13 (e) "Locked-out individual" means a single adult who has more than one felony criminal  
2.14 conviction and meets at least two of the following criteria:

2.15 (1) a history of chronic unemployment;

2.16 (2) a mental illness;

2.17 (3) chemical dependency; or

2.18 (4) is either homeless or at risk of being homeless.

2.19 Subd. 3. **Report.** The commissioner shall prepare a biennial report, beginning in October  
2.20 2018, which provides information to the legislative committees having jurisdiction over  
2.21 locked-out individuals, including but not limited to:

2.22 (1) the service needs of locked-out individuals and areas of the state with the greatest  
2.23 need for services;

2.24 (2) details about grants made;

2.25 (3) the distribution of funds throughout the state based on population need;

2.26 (4) in consultation with the commissioner of management and budget and the  
2.27 commissioner of corrections, on the savings, if any, to the state through (i) individuals'  
2.28 increased employment and stable housing, and (ii) reduced state spending on government  
2.29 crisis interventions; and

2.30 (5) any other outcomes for populations served to determine the effectiveness of the  
2.31 program and use of funding.

3.1 Subd. 4. Services. (a) The provider recipient shall use the grant to provide locked-out  
3.2 individuals with affordable housing, such as project-based housing or rental assistance, and  
3.3 at least four of the following services:

3.4 (1) employment, training, and job placement;

3.5 (2) access to medical and dental care and mental health care;

3.6 (3) independent living skills training;

3.7 (4) parenting skills, family reunification services, and child support services;

3.8 (5) advocacy and referral services; or

3.9 (6) aftercare and follow-up services.

3.10 (b) In awarding grants, the commissioner shall prioritize applicants based on the number  
3.11 of services listed in paragraph (a) that the applicant is capable of providing. An applicant  
3.12 who is capable of providing the greatest number of services has the highest priority in  
3.13 receiving a grant.

3.14 **Sec. 2. APPROPRIATION.**

3.15 \$14,100,000 in fiscal year 2018 is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner  
3.16 of human services for the unlocking opportunities grant program under Minnesota Statutes,  
3.17 section 256K.50. This appropriation is added to the base.