

SENATE
STATE OF MINNESOTA
EIGHTY-NINTH SESSION

S.F. No. 766

(SENATE AUTHORS: HOFFMAN, Franzen, Osmek, Bonoff and Hayden)

DATE	D-PG	OFFICIAL STATUS
02/12/2015	270	Introduction and first reading Referred to Higher Education and Workforce Development
02/26/2015	418a	Comm report: To pass as amended and re-refer to State and Local Government
03/04/2015		Comm report: To pass as amended and re-refer to Finance

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

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

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

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

Subd. 2. **Small business grant and loan program.** A program to provide
grants and loans to small businesses conducting research on innovative treatments and
rehabilitative efforts for the functional improvement of people with spinal cord and
traumatic brain injuries is established to provide phase I and phase II research for these
conditions. Phase I research is to establish the technical merit, feasibility, and commercial
potential of the proposed research and research and development efforts and to determine
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 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 veteran who has a spinal cord injury or a traumatic brain injury;
- (10) one member who is a family member of a person with a traumatic brain injury;
- (11) one member who is a physician specializing in the treatment of spinal cord injury; and
- (12) one member who is a physician specializing in the treatment of traumatic brain injury.

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. Notwithstanding section 15.059, subdivision 5, the advisory council does not expire.

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

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

3.6 Subd. 5. **Conflict of interest.** Council members must disclose in a written statement
3.7 any financial interest in any organization that the council recommends to receive a grant.
3.8 The written statement must accompany the grant recommendations and must explain the
3.9 nature of the conflict. The council is not subject to policies developed by the commissioner
3.10 of administration under section 16B.98.

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

3.12 (1) develop criteria for evaluating and awarding the research grants under section
3.13 136A.901;

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

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

3.17 Sec. 3. **APPROPRIATION.**

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