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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-FIRST SESSION

H. F. No. 1898

02/28/2019 Authored by Hassan, Lee, Noor, Hansen, Gomez and others
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Health and Human Services Policy
03/20/2019 Adoption of Report: Re-referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to health; creating a public awareness campaign on the health dangers of
1.3 using skin lightening creams containing mercury; appropriating money.

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

1.5 Section 1. SKIN LIGHTENING PRODUCTS PUBLIC AWARENESS AND
1.6 EDUCATION GRANT PROGRAM.

1.7 Subdivision 1. Establishment; purpose. The commissioner of health shall develop a
1.8 grant program for the purpose of increasing public awareness and education on the health
1.9 dangers associated with using skin lightening creams and products that contain mercury
1.10 that are manufactured in other countries and brought into this country and sold illegally
1.11 online or in stores.

1.12 Subd. 2. Grants authorized. The commissioner shall award grants through a request
1.13 for proposal process to community-based organizations serving ethnic communities, local
1.14 public health entities, and nonprofit organizations that focus on providing health care and
1.15 public health outreach to minorities. Priority shall be given to organizations that have
1.16 historically served ethnic communities at significant risk from these products, but have not
1.17 traditionally had access to state grant funding.

1.18 Subd. 3. Grant allocation. (a) Grantees must use the funds to conduct public awareness
1.19 and education activities that are culturally specific and community-based and focus on:

1.20 (1) the dangers of exposure to mercury through dermal absorption, inhalation,
1.21 hand-to-mouth contact, and through contact with individuals who have used these skin
1.22 lightening products;

- 2.1 (2) the signs and symptoms of mercury poisoning;
- 2.2 (3) the health effects of mercury poisoning, including the permanent effects on the central
- 2.3 nervous system and kidneys;
- 2.4 (4) the dangers of using these products or being exposed to these products during
- 2.5 pregnancy and breastfeeding to the mother and to the infant;
- 2.6 (5) knowing how to identify products that contain mercury; and
- 2.7 (6) proper disposal of the product if the product contains mercury.
- 2.8 (b) The grant application must include:
- 2.9 (1) a description of the purpose or project for which the grant funds will be used;
- 2.10 (2) a description of the objectives, a work plan, and a timeline for implementation; and
- 2.11 (3) the community or group the grant proposes to focus on.
- 2.12 (c) The commissioner shall award 50 percent of the grant funds to community-based
- 2.13 organizations and nonprofit organizations and 50 percent of the funds to local public health
- 2.14 entities.

2.15 Sec. 2. **APPROPRIATION.**

- 2.16 \$..... in fiscal year 2020 and \$..... in fiscal year 2021 are appropriated from the general
- 2.17 fund to the commissioner of health for the skin lightening products public awareness and
- 2.18 education grant program.