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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-THIRD SESSION

H. F. No. 2411

03/02/2023 Authored by Sencer-Mura, Her, Pursell, Kiel and Cha
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Agriculture Finance and Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to economic development; appropriating money to WomenVenture to
1.3 establish a business expansion program for women food entrepreneurs.

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

1.5 Section 1. APPROPRIATION; WOMENVENTURE, WOMEN FOOD
1.6 ENTREPRENEURS BUSINESS EXPANSION.

1.7 (a) \$3,000,000 in fiscal year 2024 and \$3,000,000 in fiscal year 2025 are appropriated
1.8 from the general fund to the commissioner of employment and economic development for
1.9 a grant to WomenVenture to: support business expansion for women food entrepreneurs
1.10 throughout Minnesota's food supply chain to help stabilize and strengthen their business
1.11 operations; create distribution networks; offer technical assistance and support to beginning
1.12 women food entrepreneurs; develop business plans; develop a workforce; research expansion
1.13 strategies; and for other related activities. Eligible uses of funds include but are not limited
1.14 to:

- 1.15 (1) leasehold improvements;
1.16 (2) additions, alterations, remodeling, or renovations to rented space;
1.17 (3) inventory or supplies;
1.18 (4) machinery or equipment purchases;
1.19 (5) working capital; and
1.20 (6) debt refinancing.

2.1 Funds distributed to entrepreneurs may be loans, forgivable loans, and grants. Of this
2.2 amount, up to ten percent may be used for the WomenVenture's technical assistance and
2.3 administrative costs. This appropriation is onetime and available until June 30, 2026.

2.4 (b) \$3,000,000 in fiscal year 2024 and \$3,000,000 in fiscal year 2025 are appropriated
2.5 from the general fund to the commissioner of agriculture for a grant to WomenVenture to:
2.6 support business expansion for women food entrepreneurs throughout Minnesota to help
2.7 stabilize and strengthen their business operations; create distribution networks; offer technical
2.8 assistance and support to beginning women food entrepreneurs; develop business plans;
2.9 develop a workforce; research expansion strategies to address food safety assessments and
2.10 to meet applicable food safety regulations; and for other related activities. Eligible uses of
2.11 funds include but are not limited to:

2.12 (1) leasehold improvements;

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

2.14 (3) inventory or supplies;

2.15 (4) machinery or equipment purchases;

2.16 (5) working capital; and

2.17 (6) debt refinancing.

2.18 Funds distributed to entrepreneurs may be loans, forgivable loans, and grants. A minimum
2.19 of 50 percent of this amount shall be distributed to producers registered as Cottage Foods
2.20 Producers with the commissioner under Minnesota Statutes, section 28A.152, subdivision
2.21 4. Of this amount, up to ten percent may be used for the WomenVenture's technical assistance
2.22 and administrative costs. This appropriation is onetime and available until June 30, 2026.