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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETIETH SESSION

H. F. No. 3760

03/14/2018 Authored by Wagenius, Mahoney, Hansen, Lee, Maye Quade and others
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Job Growth and Energy Affordability Policy and Finance

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to energy; establishing a grant program to assist public school districts to
1.3 install solar energy systems; appropriating money; proposing coding for new law
1.4 in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 216C.

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

1.6 Section 1. [216C.418] SOLAR ENERGY GRANTS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

1.7 Subdivision 1. Definitions. (a) For the purposes of this section, the following terms have
1.8 the meaning given them.

1.9 (b) "Energy storage system" means a commercially available technology capable of (1)
1.10 absorbing and storing electrical energy, and (2) dispatching stored electrical energy at a
1.11 later time.

1.12 (c) "Photovoltaic device" has the meaning given in section 216C.06, subdivision 16.

1.13 (d) "School district" means an independent or special school district.

1.14 (e) "Solar energy system" means photovoltaic devices installed alone or in conjunction
1.15 with a solar thermal system or an energy storage system.

1.16 (f) "Solar thermal system" means a flat plate or evacuated tube with a fixed orientation
1.17 that collects the sun's radiant energy and transfers it to a storage medium for distribution as
1.18 energy to heat or cool air or water.

1.19 Subd. 2. Establishment. A grant program is established under the Department of
1.20 Commerce to award grants to school districts to fund the design, purchase, and installation
1.21 of solar energy systems on school district buildings.

2.1 Subd. 3. **Eligible applicants.** In order to be eligible to receive a grant under this section,
2.2 a school district must obtain electric service from the public utility that owns a nuclear
2.3 electric generating facility in Minnesota.

2.4 Subd. 4. **Eligible expenditures.** (a) Grants awarded to a school district under this section:

2.5 (1) may be used to pay up to 95 percent of the cost of designing, engineering, purchasing,
2.6 and installing a solar energy system;

2.7 (2) must be used to fund a solar energy system whose capacity matches the electric load
2.8 of the school district building using the electricity generated, but must not exceed 300
2.9 kilowatts; and

2.10 (3) must be used to fund a solar energy system placed on, adjacent to, or in proximity
2.11 to the school district building using the electricity generated.

2.12 (b) A school district that receives a rebate or other financial incentive for a solar energy
2.13 system under section 116C.7792, or from any utility is not eligible to receive a grant under
2.14 this section for the same solar energy system.

2.15 Subd. 5. **Application process.** A school district must submit an application to the
2.16 commissioner on a form prescribed by the commissioner. The commissioner must develop
2.17 administrative procedures governing the application and grant award process, and must
2.18 award grants on a first-come, first-served basis.

2.19 Subd. 6. **Geographical distribution of grants.** The commissioner must endeavor to
2.20 award grants under this section to school districts located throughout the electric service
2.21 territory of the public utility that owns a nuclear electric generating facility in Minnesota.

2.22 Subd. 7. **Other funds.** A school district may issue debt under section 123B.62 to provide
2.23 its share of the costs for a solar energy system receiving a grant under this section.

2.24 Subd. 8. **Appropriation.** Notwithstanding section 116C.779, subdivision 1, paragraph
2.25 (j), \$16,000,000 in fiscal year 2019 is appropriated from the renewable development account
2.26 under section 116C.779, paragraph (a), to the commissioner of commerce for the purposes
2.27 under subdivision 2. This is a onetime appropriation and is available until June 30, 2021.
2.28 Any unexpended funds remaining after June 30, 2021, cancel to the renewable development
2.29 account under section 116C.779, subdivision 1, paragraph (a).

2.30 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective the day following final enactment.