

SENATE
STATE OF MINNESOTA
EIGHTY-EIGHTH SESSION

S.F. No. 1879

(SENATE AUTHORS: TOMASSONI, Bonoff and Ruud)

DATE	D-PG	OFFICIAL STATUS
02/25/2014	5842	Introduction and first reading Referred to Jobs, Agriculture and Rural Development
03/19/2014	6304a 6374	Comm report: To pass as amended Second reading

1.1 A bill for an act
 1.2 relating to employment; implementing a grant program to provide supported
 1.3 employment services to persons who are deaf, deafblind, and hard-of-hearing;
 1.4 proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 268A.

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

1.6 Section 1. [268A.16] EMPLOYMENT SERVICES FOR PERSONS WHO ARE
 1.7 DEAF, DEAFBLIND, OR HARD-OF-HEARING.

1.8 Subdivision 1. Deaf, deafblind, and hard-of-hearing grants. (a) The
 1.9 commissioner shall develop and implement a specialized statewide grant program to
 1.10 provide long-term supported employment services for persons who are deaf, deafblind,
 1.11 and hard-of-hearing. Programs and services eligible for grants under this section must:

1.12 (1) assist persons who are deaf, deafblind, and hard-of-hearing in retaining and
 1.13 advancing in employment;

1.14 (2) provide services with staff who must possess fluency in all forms of manual
 1.15 communication, including American Sign Language, knowledge of hearing loss and
 1.16 psycho-social implications, sensitivity to cultural issues, familiarity with community
 1.17 services, communication strategies for people who are hard-of-hearing and do not sign,
 1.18 and awareness of adaptive technology options;

1.19 (3) provide specialized employment support services for individuals who have a
 1.20 combined hearing and vision loss that address their unique ongoing visual and auditory
 1.21 communication needs; and

1.22 (4) involve clients in the planning, development, oversight, and delivery of
 1.23 long-term ongoing support services.

2.1 (b) Priority for funding shall be given to organizations with experience in developing
2.2 innovative employment support services for persons who are deaf, deafblind, and
2.3 hard-of-hearing. Each applicant for funds under this section shall submit an evaluation
2.4 protocol as part of the grant application.

2.5 Subd. 2. **Employment services for transition-aged youth who are deaf,**
2.6 **deafblind, and hard-of-hearing.** (a) The commissioner shall develop statewide or
2.7 regional grant programs to provide school-based communication, access, and employment
2.8 services for youth who are deaf, deafblind, and hard-of-hearing. Services must include
2.9 staff who have the skills addressed in subdivision 1, clauses (2) and (3), and expertise
2.10 in serving transition-aged youth.

2.11 (b) Priority for funding shall be given to organizations with experience in providing
2.12 innovative employment support services and readiness for postsecondary training for
2.13 transition-aged youths who are deaf, deafblind, and hard-of-hearing. Each applicant for
2.14 funds under this section shall submit an evaluation protocol as part of the grant application.

2.15 Subd. 3. **Administration.** Up to five percent of the biennial appropriation for the
2.16 purpose of this section is available to the commissioner for administration of the program.

2.17 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective July 1, 2015.