

SENATE

STATE OF MINNESOTA

EIGHTY-NINTH SESSION

S.F. No. 2722

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DATE	D-PG	OFFICIAL STATUS
03/14/2016	5038	Introduction and first reading Referred to Jobs, Agriculture and Rural Development
04/06/2016	5657a	Comm report: To pass as amended and re-refer to Finance

A bill for an act
relating to economic development; establishing a greater Minnesota brain
gain regional workforce and community development pilot grant program;
appropriating money.

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

Section 1. **GREATER MINNESOTA WORKFORCE AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT PILOT GRANT PROGRAM.**

(a) The commissioner of employment and economic development shall establish
a greater Minnesota brain gain regional workforce and community development pilot
grant program to provide grants in equal amounts to eligible organizations to identify and
support local economic development initiatives in greater Minnesota designed to attract
workers and new residents by marketing regional assets through enhanced digital content.
Up to percent of a grant may be used for administrative costs.

(b) For the purposes of this section, "eligible organization" means a regional
development commission, or regional initiative foundation in regions of the state where no
regional development commission operates, which meets the following criteria:

(1) the organization operates in a county with no more than 60,000 residents based
on the most recent United States Census data;

(2) the organization can demonstrate the existence of local economic development
initiatives within the organization's service area operating to attract new workers and
residents by marketing regional assets through enhanced digital content; and

(3) the organization can demonstrate that communities, including counties, cities, or
towns, located in the organization's service area:

2.1 (i) are engaged in collaborative regional marketing efforts to increase the online
2.2 presence of the communities;

2.3 (ii) have developed and are currently operating active social media outreach
2.4 campaigns promoting a progressive business climate and targeting industries identified as
2.5 desirable; and

2.6 (iii) can demonstrate that outreach efforts are creating interest in the region and
2.7 promoting the area by working to attract new businesses, growing existing businesses, and
2.8 expanding the local workforce.

2.9 (c) A regional development commission or regional initiative foundation selected
2.10 to participate in the pilot program may award funds to counties that meet the population
2.11 limit established under paragraph (b), clause (1), two or more cities or towns, or a tribe
2.12 that joins at least one county, city, or town within a county, meeting that population
2.13 limit through a competitive grant process. Communities eligible to apply to a regional
2.14 development commission or regional initiative foundation for funding must:

2.15 (1) demonstrate the existence of regional economic development initiatives within
2.16 their boundaries that are working to attract workers and new residents by marketing
2.17 through enhanced digital content;

2.18 (2) not exceed the population limit established under paragraph (b), clause (1);

2.19 (3) demonstrate participation in collaborative regional marketing efforts to increase
2.20 the online presence of the community;

2.21 (4) demonstrate they have developed active social media outreach campaigns
2.22 promoting a progressive business climate and targeting industries identified as desirable;

2.23 (5) demonstrate that outreach efforts are: creating interest in the region; promoting
2.24 the area in attracting new businesses and growing existing businesses; and working to
2.25 expand the local workforce.

2.26 (d) Grants available under this section may be used for the following purposes:

2.27 (1) operating costs, including but not limited to staff, office space, computers,
2.28 software, travel, and Web development and maintenance services;

2.29 (2) organization of local support and collaborative activities to train and mobilize
2.30 participants to become community ambassadors through the digital platforms;

2.31 (3) construction and maintenance of social media infrastructure; and

2.32 (4) Web development and maintenance including service contracts with vendors
2.33 having at least three years' prior economic development related marketing and Web
2.34 construction management experience, at least six current economic development clients,
2.35 and who have demonstrated a strong background in working to increase the online profile
2.36 of local governments. Preference must be given to Minnesota-based contractors having at

3.1 least three years of economic development marketing experience. Any final Web solution
3.2 must be integrated with the Minnesota LocationOne Information System or its successor.

3.3 (e) Any grant award under this section must be matched with nonstate resources
3.4 at a level of 25 percent.

3.5 (f) By January 1, 2017, grant recipients shall report to the commissioner on the
3.6 use of grant funds and:

3.7 (1) Web site creation and Web interactions;

3.8 (2) the number of contacts with businesses, local economic developers, and other
3.9 relevant contacts made through social media infrastructure; and

3.10 (3) identify the type and quality of social media measures implemented using grant
3.11 funds.

3.12 (g) By February 15, 2017, the commissioner shall report to the chairs and ranking
3.13 minority members of the committees of the house of representatives and the senate
3.14 having jurisdiction over economic development issues on the information reported under
3.15 paragraph (f).

3.16 **Sec. 2. APPROPRIATION.**

3.17 \$1,000,000 in fiscal year 2017 is appropriated from the general fund to the
3.18 commissioner of employment and economic development for the greater Minnesota brain
3.19 gain regional workforce and community development pilot grant program established in
3.20 section 1. This is a onetime appropriation and is available until June 30, 2019.