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State of Minnesota
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTY-NINTH SESSION

H. F. No. 2872

03/10/2016 Authored by Kiel, Ecklund, Baker and Gunther

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Greater Minnesota Economic and Workforce Development Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to economic development; establishing a greater Minnesota workforce
1.3 and community development pilot grant program; appropriating money.

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

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

1.7 (a) The commissioner of employment and economic development shall establish a
1.8 greater Minnesota workforce and community development pilot grant program to provide
1.9 grants to eligible organizations to identify and support local economic development
1.10 initiatives in greater Minnesota designed to attract workers and new residents by
1.11 marketing regional assets through enhanced digital content.

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

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

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

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

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

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

2.4 (iii) can demonstrate that outreach efforts are: creating interest in the region;
2.5 promoting the area in attracting new businesses and growing existing businesses; and
2.6 expanding the local workforce; and

2.7 (iv) can demonstrate that outreach efforts have attracted new workers or residents
2.8 to the communities.

2.9 (c) A regional development commission or regional initiative foundation selected
2.10 to participate in the pilot program may award funds to local communities through a
2.11 competitive grant process. Local communities eligible to apply to a regional development
2.12 commission or regional initiative foundation for funding must:

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

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

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

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

2.21 (5) demonstrate that outreach efforts are: creating interest in the region; promoting
2.22 the area in attracting new businesses and growing existing businesses; and expanding
2.23 the local workforce; and

2.24 (6) demonstrate that outreach efforts have attracted new workers or residents to
2.25 the community.

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 Sec. 2. **APPROPRIATION.**

3.6 \$..... in fiscal year 2017 is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner
3.7 of employment and economic development for the greater Minnesota workforce and
3.8 community development pilot grant program established in section 1. This is a onetime
3.9 appropriation.