

SENATE
STATE OF MINNESOTA
NINETY-THIRD SESSION

S.F. No. 5117

(SENATE AUTHORS: HAWJ, Hoffman, Champion, Dibble and Limmer)

DATE
03/20/2024

D-PG

Introduction and first reading
Referred to Transportation

OFFICIAL STATUS

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to motor vehicles; establishing the Lights On grant program; appropriating
1.3 money; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 169.

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

1.5 Section 1. **[169.515] LIGHTS ON GRANT PROGRAM.**

1.6 Subdivision 1. **Grant program established; purpose.** The Lights On grant program is
1.7 established under this section to provide drivers on Minnesota roads with vouchers of up
1.8 to \$250 to use at participating auto repair shops to repair or replace broken or malfunctioning
1.9 lighting equipment required under sections 169.49 to 169.51. Grant funds awarded under
1.10 this program are intended to increase safety on Minnesota roads by ensuring vehicle lights
1.11 are properly illuminated, offering drivers restorative solutions rather than punishment for
1.12 malfunctioning equipment, lessening the financial burden of traffic tickets on low-income
1.13 drivers, and improving police-community relations.

1.14 Subd. 2. **Eligibility.** Counties, cities, towns, and local law enforcement agencies,
1.15 including law enforcement agencies of a federally recognized Tribe, as defined in United
1.16 States Code, title 25, section 5304(e), are eligible to apply for grants under this section.

1.17 Subd. 3. **Application.** (a) The commissioner of public safety must develop application
1.18 materials and procedures for the Lights On grant program.

1.19 (b) The application must describe the type or types of intended vouchers, the amount of
1.20 money requested, and any other information deemed necessary by the commissioner.

1.21 (c) Applicants must submit an application under this section in the form and manner
1.22 prescribed by the commissioner.

2.1 (d) Applicants must describe how grant money will be used to provide and distribute
2.2 vouchers to drivers.

2.3 (e) Applicants must keep records of vouchers distributed and records of all expenses
2.4 associated with awarded grant money.

2.5 Subd. 4. **Grant criteria.** Preference for grant awards must be given to applicants whose
2.6 proposals provide resources and vouchers to individuals residing in geographic areas that
2.7 have historically received underinvestment and have high poverty rates.

2.8 Subd. 5. **Reporting.** By February 1 each year, grant recipients must submit a report to
2.9 the commissioner itemizing all expenditures made using grant money, the purpose of each
2.10 expenditure, and the disposition of each contact made with drivers with malfunctioning or
2.11 broken lighting equipment. The report must be in the form and manner prescribed by the
2.12 commissioner.

2.13 Sec. 2. **APPROPRIATION; LIGHTS ON GRANT PROGRAM.**

2.14 (a) \$1,200,000 in fiscal year 2025 is appropriated from the highway user tax distribution
2.15 fund to the commissioner of public safety for the Lights On grant program under Minnesota
2.16 Statutes, section 169.515. The commissioner, through the Office of Traffic Safety, must
2.17 contract with the Lights On! microgrant program to administer and operate the grant program.

2.18 (b) The base is \$1,200,000 for fiscal year 2026 and each year thereafter. Any balance
2.19 at the end of the first fiscal year does not cancel and is available the second year. To the
2.20 extent practicable, the base must be adjusted for inflation at the end of each biennium.