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State of Minnesota
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTY-NINTH SESSION

H. F. No. 3649

03/29/2016 Authored by Dehn, R.; Johnson, S., and Kahn

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Health and Human Services Reform

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to human services; establishing the unlocking opportunities grant
1.3 program; appropriating money; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota
1.4 Statutes, chapter 256K.

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

1.6 Section 1. **[256K.50] UNLOCKING OPPORTUNITIES GRANT PROGRAM.**

1.7 Subdivision 1. Grant program established. (a) The commissioner of human
1.8 services shall establish the unlocking opportunities grant program and award grants
1.9 to providers committed to and capable of serving locked-out individuals with
1.10 community-based housing services.

1.11 (b) The unlocking opportunities grant program is created to serve locked-out
1.12 individuals, particularly African American men and people of color, who experience
1.13 violence, poverty, homelessness, and incarceration, and are without access to needed
1.14 resources.

1.15 (c) The purpose of the unlocking opportunities grant program is to provide
1.16 community-based housing services to increase locked-out individuals' access to stable
1.17 housing and employment; improve the individuals' mental and physical well-being; and
1.18 reduce recidivism.

1.19 Subd. 2. Definitions. (a) For purposes of this section, the following terms have
1.20 the meanings given them.

1.21 (b) "At risk of being homeless" means a person whose status or circumstances
1.22 indicate a significant danger of experiencing homelessness in the future.

1.23 (c) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of human services.

2.1 (d) "Homeless" means a person who is without shelter, or who lacks a fixed, regular,
2.2 and adequate nighttime residence. A homeless person is not a person incarcerated or
2.3 otherwise detained under federal or state law. The following are not fixed, regular, or
2.4 adequate nighttime residences:

2.5 (1) a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary
2.6 living accommodations;

2.7 (2) an institution or a publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide
2.8 temporary living accommodations;

2.9 (3) a temporary placement with a peer, friend, or family member that has not offered
2.10 permanent residence, a residential lease, or temporary lodging for more than 30 days; or

2.11 (4) a public or private place not designed for, nor ordinarily used as, a regular
2.12 sleeping accommodation for human beings.

2.13 (e) "Locked-out individual" means a single adult who has more than one felony
2.14 criminal conviction and meets at least two of the following criteria:

2.15 (1) a history of chronic unemployment;

2.16 (2) a mental illness;

2.17 (3) chemical dependency; or

2.18 (4) is either homeless or at risk of being homeless.

2.19 Subd. 3. **Report.** The commissioner shall prepare a biennial report, beginning
2.20 in October 2017, which provides information to the legislative committees having
2.21 jurisdiction over locked-out individuals, including but not limited to:

2.22 (1) the service needs of locked-out individuals and areas of the state with the greatest
2.23 need for services;

2.24 (2) details about grants made;

2.25 (3) the distribution of funds throughout the state based on population need;

2.26 (4) in consultation with the commissioner of management and budget and the
2.27 commissioner of corrections, on the savings, if any, to the state through (i) individuals'
2.28 increased employment and stable housing, and (ii) reduced state spending on government
2.29 crisis interventions; and

2.30 (5) any other outcomes for populations served to determine the effectiveness of
2.31 the program and use of funding.

2.32 Subd. 4. **Services.** (a) The provider recipient shall use the grant to provide
2.33 locked-out individuals with affordable housing, such as project-based housing or rental
2.34 assistance, and at least four of the following services:

2.35 (1) employment, training, and job placement;

2.36 (2) access to medical and dental care and mental health care;

- 3.1 (3) independent living skills training;
3.2 (4) parenting skills, family reunification services, and child support services;
3.3 (5) advocacy and referral services; or
3.4 (6) aftercare and follow-up services.
- 3.5 (b) In awarding grants, the commissioner shall prioritize applicants based on the
3.6 number of services listed in paragraph (a) that the applicant is capable of providing. An
3.7 applicant who is capable of providing the greatest number of services has the highest
3.8 priority in receiving a grant.

3.9 Sec. 2. **APPROPRIATION.**

3.10 \$14,100,000 in fiscal year 2017 is appropriated from the general fund to the
3.11 commissioner of human services for the unlocking opportunities grant program under
3.12 Minnesota Statutes, section 256K.50. This appropriation is added to the base.