

HOUSE BILL NO. 310

INTRODUCED BY M. NIKOLAKAKOS, J. WEBER, V. MOORE, D. ZOLNIKOV, J. KASSMIER, G. LAMMERS,
L. SMITH, M. YAKAWICH, S. FITZPATRICK, R. MINER, K. ZOLNIKOV, L. BREWSTER, J. FITZPATRICK, G.
NIKOLAKAKOS, E. STAFMAN, S. ESSMANN, J. DARLING, C. FITZPATRICK

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ESTABLISHING A GRANT PROGRAM TO INCREASE
COMMUNITY SHELTER CAPACITY TO SERVE THE HOMELESS POPULATION; ESTABLISHING CRITERIA
FOR GRANT AWARDS; PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION; PROVIDING RULEMAKING AUTHORITY; AND
PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND A TERMINATION DATE."

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

**NEW SECTION. Section 1. State matching grants for homeless shelter capacity -- rulemaking
authority.** (1) As soon as possible after July 1, 2025, from funds appropriated by the legislature for the
purposes of this section, the department of ~~public health and human services~~ COMMERCE shall grant eligible
applicants state matching funds AT A ONE-TO-ONE RATIO to serve one or more of the following categories of
persons:

(a) INDIVIDUALS WITH MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS OR WITH A SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER;

(B) INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE HOMELESS OR HOMELESS FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN;

(C) senior citizens;

(b) (D) veterans;

(e) (E) survivors of domestic violence; OR

(d) (F) youth preparing to transition out of foster care due to age; or

(e) individuals with mental health needs or with a substance use disorder.

(2) An applicant for matching funds under this section:

(a) must be a local government or a nonprofit corporation meeting the requirements of Title 35,
chapter 2, that is exempt from taxation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, 26 U.S.C.
501(c)(3);

(b) shall include in its grant application a detailed plan for how the applicant will collaborate with existing homelessness service providers; and

(c) shall indicate the source and amount of matching funds for the project.

(3) In awarding grants, the department shall prioritize to the greatest extent possible projects that:

(a) provide for geographic diversity in funded projects;

(b) address existing gaps in the ability of available shelter services to meet the community's need for shelter services; and

(c) include the availability of PRIVATE, local, and federal matching funds.

(4) THE DEPARTMENT MAY NOT AWARD MORE THAN \$250,000 IN MATCHING FUNDS FOR PROJECTS SERVING THE SAME COUNTY.

(5) THE APPLICATION PROCESS MUST UTILIZE A 1,000-POINT WEIGHTED SCORING SYSTEM. THE APPLICATIONS MUST RECEIVE POINTS ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING PRIORITIES:

(A) UP TO 250 POINTS FOR GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY;

(B) UP TO 100 POINTS FOR THE CAPACITY OF THE APPLICANT;

(C) UP TO 150 POINTS FOR AFFORDABILITY AND FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY;

(D) UP TO 250 POINTS FOR COMMUNITY NEED; AND

(E) UP TO 250 POINTS FOR POTENTIAL IMPACT IN RESPONDING TO COMMUNITY NEED.

(4) (6) The department shall adopt rules to implement this section, including provisions for:

(a) the application process;

(b) criteria for grant awards; and

(c) information to be reported to the department by grant recipients.

(5) (7) The department shall report to the ~~children, families, health, and human services~~ ECONOMIC AFFAIRS interim committee no later than August 30, 2026, on the results of the grant program.

NEW SECTION. Section 2. Appropriation. There is appropriated \$2 million from the general fund to the department of ~~public health and human services~~ COMMERCE for the biennium beginning July 1, 2025, for the purposes of [section 1]. Funds that are unencumbered on June 30, 2027, must revert to the general fund.

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