

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);

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

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

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

5 (a) provide for geographic diversity in funded projects;

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

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

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

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

13 (A) UP TO 250 POINTS FOR GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY;

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

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

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

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

18 (4)(6) The department shall adopt rules to implement this section, including provisions for:

19 (a) the application process;

20 (b) criteria for grant awards; and

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

22 (5)(7) The department shall report to the ~~children, families, health, and human services~~ ECONOMIC  
23 AFFAIRS interim committee no later than August 30, 2026, on the results of the grant program.

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

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1            **NEW SECTION. Section 3. Codification instruction.** [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an  
2 integral part of Title 53, chapter 2, part 2, and the provisions of Title 53, chapter 2, part 2, apply to [section 1].

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4            **NEW SECTION. Section 4. Effective date.** [This act] is effective July 1, 2025.

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6            **NEW SECTION. Section 5. Termination.** [This act] terminates June 30, 2027.

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