



2021 ASSEMBLY BILL 873

January 18, 2022 - Introduced by Representatives TITTL, WITTKE, ANDERSON, ANDRACA, CABRAL-GUEVARA, CONLEY, DUCHOW, HEBL, HINTZ, HONG, MAGNAFICI, VINING, VRUWINK, SHELTON and SINICKI, cosponsored by Senators CARPENTER, LARSON, RINGHAND and WANGGAARD. Referred to Committee on Colleges and Universities.

1 **AN ACT to create** 15.197 (20), 20.435 (1) (cd) and 255.45 of the statutes; **relating**
2 **to:** spinal cord injury research grants and symposia and making an
3 appropriation.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill requires the Department of Health Services to establish a program to award grants to persons in this state for research into spinal cord injuries. The grants must support research into new and innovative treatments and rehabilitative efforts for the functional improvement of people with spinal cord injuries. Research topics may include pharmaceutical, medical device, brain stimulus, and rehabilitative approaches and techniques. DHS must make annual reports to the legislature about the grants. The bill also allows DHS to hold symposia every two years for grant recipients to present their research findings. The bill appropriates general purpose revenues not exceeding \$3,000,000 every fiscal biennium for the grants and symposia.

The bill also requires DHS to appoint a Spinal Cord Injury Council with one member representing the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, one member representing the Medical College of Wisconsin, and the following members: 1) a person with a spinal cord injury; 2) a family member of a person with a spinal cord injury; 3) a veteran with a spinal cord injury; 4) a physician specializing in the treatment of spinal cord injuries; 5) a neurosurgery researcher; and 6) a researcher employed by the federal Veterans Health Administration of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. If DHS is unable to appoint any of the foregoing

ASSEMBLY BILL 873

members, the bill allows DHS to appoint, in lieu of that member, a member representing the general public. Members of the council have two-year terms. The bill requires the council to develop criteria for DHS to evaluate and award grants, review and make recommendations on grant applications, and perform other duties specified by DHS. Council members must make written disclosures of financial interests in organizations that the council recommends for grants.

For further information see the state fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

1 **SECTION 1.** 15.197 (20) of the statutes is created to read:

2 15.197 (20) SPINAL CORD INJURY COUNCIL. (a) There is created in the department
3 of health services a spinal cord injury council that, except as provided in par. (b),
4 consists of the following members appointed by the department for 2-year terms:

5 1. One member representing the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine
6 and Public Health.

7 2. One member representing the Medical College of Wisconsin.

8 3. One member who has a spinal cord injury.

9 4. One member who is a family member of a person with a spinal cord injury.

10 5. One member who is a veteran who has a spinal cord injury.

11 6. One member who is a physician specializing in the treatment of spinal cord
12 injuries.

13 7. One member who is a researcher in the field of neurosurgery.

14 8. One member who is a researcher employed by the veterans health
15 administration of the U.S. department of veterans affairs.

16 (b) If the department of health services is unable to appoint a member specified
17 in par. (a) 1. to 8., the department of health services may appoint a member
18 representing the general public in lieu of the member so specified.

ASSEMBLY BILL 873

1 **SECTION 2.** 20.435 (1) (cd) of the statutes is created to read:

2 20.435 (1) (cd) *Spinal cord injury research.* A sum sufficient not to exceed
3 \$3,000,000 for grants and symposia under s. 255.45 (2) and (3).

4 **SECTION 3.** 255.45 of the statutes is created to read:

5 **255.45 Spinal cord injury research grants and symposia. (1)**

6 DEFINITIONS. In this section:

7 (a) “Council” means the spinal cord injury council.

8 (b) “Grant program” means the program established under sub. (2).

9 **(2) GRANT PROGRAM.** From the appropriation under s. 20.435 (1) (cd), the
10 department shall award grants to persons in this state for research into spinal cord
11 injuries. The purpose of the grants is to support research into new and innovative
12 treatments and rehabilitative efforts for the functional improvement of people with
13 spinal cord injuries, and research topics may include pharmaceutical, medical
14 device, brain stimulus, and rehabilitative approaches and techniques. Grant
15 recipients shall agree to present their research findings at symposia held by the
16 department under sub. (3).

17 **(3) SYMPOSIA.** The department may hold symposia every 2 years for recipients
18 of grants under the grant program to present findings of research supported by the
19 grants.

20 **(4) GRANT REPORTS.** By January 15 of each year, the department shall submit
21 an annual report to the appropriate standing committees of the legislature under s.
22 13.172 (3) that identifies the recipients of grants under the grant program and the
23 purposes for which the grants were used.

24 **(5) COUNCIL.** (a) The council shall do all of the following:

