State of Wisconsin
2025 - 2026 LEGISLATURE

LRB-3150/1
MDE:cdc

2025 SENATE BILL 285

May 30, 2025 - Introduced by Senators TESTIN, PFAFF and FEYEN, cosponsored by Representatives ARMSTRONG, KITCHENS, KREIBICH, MURSAU, NOVAK, SWEARINGEN and WITTKE. Referred to Committee on Transportation and Local Government.

AN ACT ***to create*** 238.14 of the statutes; **relating to:** talent recruitment grants.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill directs the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation to establish and administer an economic development program for the purpose of awarding grants for talent recruitment programs to incentivize households outside of this state to relocate to municipalities in this state.

An applicant is eligible for a grant under the bill if the applicant 1) is a city, village, town, county, or American Indian tribe or band in this state or a nonprofit organization with a mission that includes economic development, workforce and talent development, or community development; 2) provides WEDC with a talent recruitment program plan identifying the estimated costs and economic impacts of the program and the program's total "household goal," meaning the total number of households the program seeks to successfully incentivize to relocate or commit to relocate from outside this state to a municipality in this state; 3) demonstrates its ability to contribute at least 20 percent of the total program cost, which may include local investments and in-kind donations; and 4) if the applicant is a previous recipient of a grant under the bill, the applicant has met its household goal stated in the talent recruitment program plan for the previous grant. A recipient of a grant under the bill must provide WEDC with semiannual reports detailing information regarding talent recruitment program outcomes.

Under the bill, a household residing outside this state relocating to this state is eligible for incentives under a talent recruitment program if the household resides outside of this state at the time the household applies for incentives, has an individual household income of at least $55,000, and submits an application to the recipient of a grant under the bill.

Under the bill, no more than $500,000 in grant moneys may be awarded to support talent recruitment programming in a single municipality in a single fiscal year. WEDC must disburse 50 percent of the total grant award upon entering into a grant contract and 50 percent of the total grant award upon the recipient reporting to WEDC that it has successfully met 50 percent of its household goal. If the recipient fails to meet half of its household goal, WEDC may not disburse the remaining grant amount.

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:

SECTION 1. 238.14 of the statutes is created to read:

238.14 Talent recruitment grants. (1) DEFINITIONS. In this section:

(a) "Household" means a group of one or more individuals who dwell together within the same dwelling.

(b) "Household goal" means the total number of households that a talent recruitment program under this section seeks to successfully incentivize to relocate or commit to relocate from outside this state to a municipality in this state.

(2) ESTABLISHMENT OF GRANT PROGRAM. The corporation shall establish and administer the economic development program under this section for the purpose of awarding grants for talent recruitment programs to incentivize households to relocate from outside this state to a municipality in this state.

(3) GRANTS. (a) The corporation shall award grants to eligible applicants under sub. (4) for the purpose of the administration of talent recruitment programs and the costs associated with incentivizing households to relocate from outside this state to municipalities in this state.

(b) No more than $500,000 in grant moneys may be awarded to support talent recruitment programming in a single municipality in a single fiscal year.

(c) The corporation shall disburse 50 percent of the total grant award upon entering into a grant contract and 50 percent of the total grant award upon the recipient reporting to the corporation that it has successfully met half of the household goal stated in the talent recruitment program plan under sub. (4) (b). If the recipient fails to meet half of its stated household goal, the corporation shall not disburse the remaining grant amount.

(4) APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY. An applicant is eligible to receive a grant if the applicant meets all of the following criteria:

(a) The applicant is any of the following:

1. A city, village, town, county, or American Indian tribe or band in this state.

2. A nonprofit organization, the mission of which includes economic development, workforce and talent development, or community development.

(b) The applicant provides the corporation with a talent recruitment program plan that includes all of the following details:

1. The total estimated cost of the program and the individual estimated costs associated with the program's design, administration, marketing, and relocation incentive initiatives.

2. The program's household goal and the estimated total grant amount per household.

3. The program's estimated state and local tax impact.

4. The program's estimated total economic impact.

(c) The applicant demonstrates its ability to contribute at least 20 percent of the total talent recruitment program cost. The applicant's contribution may include local investments and in-kind donations.

(d) If the applicant is a previous recipient of grant under this section, the applicant has met the household goal stated in the talent recruitment program plan under par. (b) for the previous grant.

(5) HOUSEHOLD ELIGIBILITY. A household is eligible for talent recruitment program incentives under this section if the household meets all of the following criteria:

(a) The household resides outside of this state at the time the household applies for talent recruitment program incentives under this section.

(b) The household has an individual household income of at least $55,000.

(c) The household submits an application to the recipient of a grant under this section to receive talent recruitment program incentives.

(6) REPORTS. Each recipient of a grant under this section shall provide semiannual reports to the corporation with the following data regarding talent recruitment program outcomes:

(a) Total number of household applications.

(b) Total number of approved households.

(c) Cost per approved household.

(d) The annual incomes and occupations of approved households.

(e) The economic impact of the talent recruitment program, including state and local tax revenue and new consumer spending.

(END)