

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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130th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2021

Legislative Document

No. 492

S.P. 200

In Senate, February 19, 2021

An Act To Create a Regional Grant Program To Help Rural Businesses Find Qualified Staff

Received by the Secretary of the Senate on February 17, 2021. Referred to the Committee on Innovation, Development, Economic Advancement and Business pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D M Grant'.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator STEWART of Aroostook.
Cosponsored by Representative BERNARD of Caribou and
Senator: LUCHINI of Hancock, Representative: BAILEY of Gorham.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §13056-I** is enacted to read:

3 **§13056-I. Rural Workforce Recruitment Program**

4 **1. Program established.** The Rural Workforce Recruitment Program, referred to in
5 this section as "the program," is established within the department to provide grants to
6 entities in rural regions of the State to aid those entities in hiring workforce recruiters to
7 assist rural businesses in those regions in locating and recruiting qualified staff to meet
8 workforce needs.

9 **2. Fund established.** The Rural Workforce Recruitment Fund, referred to in this
10 section as "the fund," is established as a nonlapsing fund within the department for the
11 purpose of providing funds for the program. The fund consists of money appropriated to
12 the fund by the Legislature and any funds received by the department for the purposes of
13 the program.

14 **3. Rulemaking.** The department shall establish by rule the criteria for eligibility for
15 grants from the program and the process of application. Rules adopted pursuant to this
16 subsection are routine technical rules as defined in chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

17 **4. Reporting.** The department shall report by January 15th of each year to the joint
18 standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over economic development
19 matters on the program, including the number of grants given and the results achieved.

20 **Sec. 2. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and
21 allocations are made.

22 **ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, DEPARTMENT OF**
23 **Rural Workforce Recruitment Fund**

24 Initiative: Provides one-time funds in fiscal year 2021-22 for eligible entities to hire a
25 workforce recruiter to advertise and promote jobs in rural regions of the State and to locate
26 qualified staff to fill the positions. Funding appropriated to this program does not lapse but
27 must be carried forward into the next fiscal year to be used only for the purpose for which
28 it was provided.

29 GENERAL FUND	2021-22	2022-23
30 All Other	\$1,000,000	\$0
31		
32 GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$1,000,000	\$0

33 **SUMMARY**

34 This bill creates a grant program and related fund for the purpose of aiding entities in
35 hiring a workforce recruiter. The purpose of the position is to advertise and promote jobs
36 in rural Maine and to locate qualified staff to fill open positions. Funds for the program
37 are provided by a one-time appropriation from the General Fund of \$1,000,000.