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H.945

Introduced by Committee on Commerce and Economic Development

Date:

Subject: Commerce and trade; manufacturing; COVID-19

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to create a  
COVID-19 Manufacturing Grant Program.

An act relating to creating a COVID-19 Manufacturing Grant Program

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. COVID-19 MANUFACTURING GRANT PROGRAM

(a) Purpose.

(1) The purpose of this section is to establish a COVID-19

Manufacturing Grant Program to assist Vermont manufacturing companies

in quickly accelerating production of items necessary to respond to the

COVID-19 outbreak.

(2) The Program shall provide grants to manufacturers to increase

capacity in current operations and to pivot production to build and assemble

critical need items that are currently or expected to be in short supply,

including:

(A) personal protection equipment, including N95 respirators,

surgical masks, cloth masks, and isolation gowns;

1           (B) respiratory care equipment, including ventilators;

2           (C) medical devices; and

3           (D) other items identified by the State Emergency Operations Center  
4 as necessary for workplace and community safety.

5           (b) Eligible recipients.

6           (1) To be eligible for a grant, an applicant shall meet the following  
7 criteria:

8           (A) the applicant has demonstrated manufacturing capacity;

9           (B) the facility where the applicant manufactures qualifying products  
10 is located in Vermont; and

11           (C) the applicant and any affiliated businesses under common  
12 ownership or control, whether within or outside this State, have 500 or fewer  
13 employees or otherwise meet a Small Business Administration classification of  
14 small business or small manufacturer; and

15           (D) the applicant can demonstrate the ability to produce the product  
16 for resale or supply at a price that is competitive with other suppliers of the  
17 same product or a reasonable substitute.

18           (2) The Agency shall give preference for grant awards to applicants who  
19 demonstrate the potential for developing new lines of business that are  
20 sustainable over the long term.

1        (c) Eligible use of funds. A recipient may use grant funds for the  
2        following:

3            (1) purchase and set up of production equipment;

4            (2) expenses necessary to produce critical care items;

5            (3) prototyping expenses for complex medical devices; and

6            (4) training expenses to train employees in the new production process  
7        and equipment.

8        (d) Amount of grants. An applicant is eligible to apply for one or more  
9        grants, the total of which shall not exceed \$20,000.00 per recipient.

10       (e) Administration of grants.

11           (1) The Agency of Commerce and Community Development shall  
12        administer the grants in coordination with the Vermont Manufacturing  
13        Extension Center and the Innovation Center at the University of Vermont.

14           (2) The Agency, the Centers, and regional development corporations  
15        shall publicize information about the Program and the application process.

16           (3) The Agency may adopt additional policies and procedures  
17        concerning the application process, eligibility, and use of funds, as it  
18        determines is necessary to administer the Program.

19        (f) Reporting:

20           (1) The Agency shall report to the General Assembly bi-weekly during  
21        the pandemic crisis on the number of grants awarded, the projected and actual

1 production volumes, and the number of entities receiving the products being  
2 produced.

3 (2) The Agency shall submit a final report on the Grant program on or  
4 before December 15, 2020.

5 (g) Funding. The Agency of Commerce and Community Development  
6 may use not more than \$500,000.00 to award grants pursuant to this act using  
7 funds appropriated to it for the New Remote Worker Grant Program created in  
8 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 197, Sec. 1, as amended by 2019 Acts and  
9 Resolves No. 80, Sec. 15 and the New Worker Relocation Incentive Program  
10 created by 2019 Acts and Resolves No. 80, Sec. 12.

11 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

12 This act shall take effect on passage.