

**JOBS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND HOUSING FINANCE BILL
H.F. 122 (Chapter 135)**

SUMMARY: The Jobs, Economic Development, and Housing Finance bill includes funding and policy changes for a wide range of items. At the start of the 2007 Legislative session, the Higher Education Finance committee was combined with the Workforce Development committee. New law summaries that affect the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system can be found below.

ARTICLE 1

Jobs, Economic Development, Housing and Minnesota

Section

3 Employment and Economic Development

Subdivision 2. Business and community development.

(a) Appropriates \$250,000 the first year and \$250,000 the second year for a grant to the Rural Policy and Development Center at St. Peter, Minnesota. The grant shall be used for research and policy analysis on emerging economic and social issues in rural Minnesota, to serve as a policy resource center for rural Minnesota communities, to encourage collaboration across higher education institutions to provide interdisciplinary team approaches to research and problem-solving in rural communities, and to administer overall operations of the center.

(h) Appropriates \$10,000 each year for the Minnesota Student Inventors Congress, a non-profit organization that supports youth and their inventions.

(l) One-time appropriation of \$300,000 to the city of Worthington for an agricultural-based bioscience training and testing center.

(m) One-time appropriation of \$1.75 million to the BioBusiness Alliance of Minnesota for a bioscience business development program to promote Minnesota as a global leader in biosciences business activities.

(n) One-time appropriation of \$125,000 to develop and operate a bioscience business marketing program in greater Minnesota.

Subd. 3. Workforce development.

(m) Restores funding for Youthbuild, including an area to focus on careers in technology and the medical field. Youthbuild is a state-funded program providing high-risk youth between the ages of 16 and 24 with an opportunity to help communities increase the supply of low and moderate income housing while providing pre-apprenticeship training and supportive services.

ARTICLE 2

Employment and Development-Related Provisions

Section

12 Workforce development intermediaries. Under the jobs skills partnership, this section defines “workforce development intermediaries” as entities with a track record of

providing employment services to low-income individuals by bringing together employers, workers, and funding sources to implement pathways to career advancement projects.

- 16 **Designation of workforce service areas.** This section allows the commissioner of the Department of Employment and Economic Development to re-designate workforce service areas only after receiving the advice of the affected local public officials.
- 31 **Restroom access.** This section requires private restroom access in retail establishments open to the public for customers with eligible medical conditions, if no public restroom is available.
- 35 **Working group on state role in trade policy.** This section creates a 17-member working group to recommend and establish policies of Minnesota trade. The group is to be overseen by the Department of Employee and Economic Development.

ARTICLE 3
Licensing and Waging

Section

- 11 **Contract requirements.** This section gives a contracting authority the ability to require that the contractor or subcontractor must furnish any and all payrolls and that the contracting authority may examine all records related to wages paid under prevailing wage agreements. The requirements of this subdivision are in addition to other current requirements or authority that applies to prevailing wage projects.
- 12 **Determination by commissioner; posting; petition for reconsideration.** This section requires each contractor or subcontractor performing work on a public project to keep prevailing wage information posted conspicuously.
- 13 **Examination of records; investigation by the department.** This section directs the Department of Labor and Industry to hire at least three investigators to perform on-site project reviews, receive and investigate complaints, and to conduct training and outreach to contractors and contracting authorities regarding prevailing wage projects.
- 14 **Prevailing wage violations.** This section authorizes the commissioner of the Department of Labor and Industry to issue compliance orders for violations of prevailing wage laws that permit the contracting authority to withhold payments.
- 16 **Prohibited action.** This section prohibits certain retaliatory actions against a public employee who communicates the findings of a scientific or technical study that the employee believes to be true and accurate.

- 39 Whistle-blower protection administrative procedures.** This section requires the commissioner of the Department of Labor and Industry to report recommendations to address whistle-blower complaints under Minnesota statute 181.932.

ARTICLE 6
Electrical

Section

- 2 Board of electricity.** This section changes the composition of the Board of Electricity to be 12 members. The Board will adopt rules to regulate the licensing of workers in this field; create rules to regulate continuing education in this field and recommend fees for licenses and certifications.

ARTICLE 8
Miscellaneous

Section

- 2 Sale of American flags.** This section requires all American flags sold in Minnesota to have been manufactured in the United States. Effective July 1, 2007.