

2022 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 796

BY REPRESENTATIVES WILLARD, BACALA, DAVIS, DUPLESSIS, FREEMAN,
HILFERTY, HOLLIS, JORDAN, NELSON, NEWELL, PRESSLY, AND THOMAS

FUNDS/FUNDING: Establishes the Small Business Innovation Fund

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 51:2312(A)(1) and to enact R.S. 51:2401, relative to certain
3 small business grants; to provide for the authority of the Department of Economic
4 Development; to create the Small Business Innovation Fund; to provide for uses of
5 monies in the fund; to provide for the administration of grants; to provide for
6 eligibility of applicants; and to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. R.S. 51:2312(A)(1) is hereby amended and reenacted and R.S. 51:2401
9 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

10 §2312. Powers and authority; duties

11 A. The corporation shall serve as the single review board for all financial
12 assistance, loans, incentives or inducements, customized workforce training,
13 investment programs, and any related appropriations, grants, or joint ventures
14 administered by the Department of Economic Development, excluding those
15 financial incentive programs administered by the State Board of Commerce and
16 Industry. The corporation shall formulate and implement the policies for the
17 delivery of services to obtain the following effects:

18 (1) The support of innovative private sector research and development
19 activities by Louisiana businesses intended to generate commercial products,
20 processes, or services by providing ~~matching~~ funds to ~~those~~ Louisiana small

1 businesses that ~~will apply for received~~ federal Small Business ~~Innovative~~ Innovation
2 Research (SBIR) ~~Phase I~~ or Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) grant
3 funds, for such federal applications submitted or received after January 1, 2023.

4 * * *

5 §2401. Small Business Innovation Fund; purpose; program administration

6 A. There is hereby created in the state treasury, as a special fund, the "Small
7 Business Innovation Fund", hereinafter referred to as the "fund".

8 B. The monies in the fund shall be used to provide financial assistance to
9 certain Louisiana businesses applying for Small Business Innovation Research,
10 hereinafter referred to as "SBIR", or Small Business Technology Transfer,
11 hereinafter referred to as "STTR", federal research grants.

12 C. After compliance with the requirements of Article VII, Section 9(B) of
13 the Constitution of Louisiana relative to the Bond Security and Redemption Fund,
14 all monies received for the purpose of the fund shall be deposited into the fund.

15 D. Monies in the fund shall be invested in the same manner as monies in the
16 general fund. Interest earned on investment of monies in the fund shall be credited
17 to the fund. Unexpended and unencumbered monies in the fund at the end of the
18 fiscal year shall remain in the fund.

19 E. The Louisiana Economic Development Corporation, hereinafter referred
20 to as "corporation", in conjunction with the Louisiana State University and
21 Agricultural and Mechanical College Louisiana Technology Transfer Office,
22 hereinafter referred to as "LTTO", shall administer the fund and provide for
23 disbursements to selected applicants in the form of grants. The LTTO shall establish
24 criteria for grant eligibility, provide for an application process, and select eligible
25 Louisiana business applicants to receive monies from the fund.

26 F. Up to one hundred fifty thousand dollars shall be annually disbursed from
27 the fund as follows:

28 (1) Up to sixty thousand dollars shall be disbursed to selected applicants in
29 the form of grants for the purpose of assisting in the completion of Phase I SBIR or

1 STTR federal grant applications. Any grant received pursuant to this Paragraph shall
2 not exceed five thousand dollars per applicant.

3 (2) Up to sixty thousand dollars shall be disbursed to selected applicants in
4 the form of grants for the purpose of assisting in the completion of Phase II SBIR or
5 STTR federal grant applications. Any grant received pursuant to this Paragraph shall
6 not exceed ten thousand dollars per applicant.

7 (3) Up to thirty thousand dollars shall be appropriated to the LTTO for the
8 purpose of funding technical assistance, outreach programs, and program-related
9 promotions.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 796 Engrossed

2022 Regular Session

Willard

Abstract: Creates the Small Business Innovation Fund for the purpose of providing financial assistance to certain businesses applying for certain federal grants.

Present law provides for the La. Economic Development Corporation (corporation) within the Department of Economic Development (department) and provides for the powers and authority of the corporation.

Present law provides that the corporation shall serve as the review board for certain financial assistance programs for La. small businesses. Further provides that the corporation shall provide support for certain activities by La. businesses to generate commercial products or services by providing matching funds to businesses that received federal Small Business Innovative Research Phase I grant funds.

Proposed law changes present law and provides that the corporation shall provide support for activities by La. businesses to generate commercial products or services by providing funds to businesses that applied for or received federal Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) or Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) grant funds.

Proposed law creates the "Small Business Innovation Fund" (fund), as a special fund in the state treasury fund. Further provides that monies in the fund shall be used to provide financial assistance to certain La. businesses applying for SBIR or STTR federal grants.

Proposed law requires all monies within the fund to comply with Article VII, Section 9(B) of the Constitution of La. relative to the Bond Security and Redemption Fund.

Proposed law requires monies in the fund to be invested in the same manner as monies in the general fund. Further provides that interest earned on investment of monies be credited to the fund. Unexpended and unencumbered monies in the fund at the end of the fiscal year shall remain in the fund.

Proposed law provides that the department shall administer the monies in the fund and provide for disbursements to eligible applicants in the form of grants. Further requires the department to establish criteria for grant eligibility, provide for an application process, and select eligible applicants to receive the grants.

Proposed law provides up to \$150,000 shall be annually disbursed from the fund as follows:

- (1) Up to \$60,000 shall be disbursed to eligible applicants to assist in the completion of Phase 1 applications for SBIR or STTR federal grants. These grants shall not exceed \$5,000 per business.
- (2) Up to \$60,000 shall be disbursed to eligible applicants to assist in the completion of Phase 2 applications for SBIR or STTR federal grants. These grants shall not exceed \$10,000 dollars per business.
- (3) Up to \$30,000 shall be appropriated to the department for the purpose of technical assistance, outreach programs, and program-related promotions.

(Amends R.S. 51:2312(A)(1); Adds R.S. 51:2401)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Commerce to the original bill:

1. Change certain references from the La. Economic Development Corporation to the Department of Economic Development.
2. Add an eligibility requirement that the federal application provided for in present law is submitted or received after January 1, 2023.
3. Move the duty of administering the fund from the La. Economic Development Corporation and the La. Technology Transfer Office to the Department of Economic Development.
4. Modify the disbursement amounts to allow for a lesser grant than the previously mandated disbursement amounts.
5. Provide that the disbursement of certain funds is to occur annually.
6. Allow the department to use certain monies for technical assistance.
7. Make technical changes.