

1 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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3 Section 1. Section 288.7055, Florida Statutes, is
4 created to read:

5 288.7055 Minority Contractors Technical Assistance
6 Grant Program; creation; administration.--

7 (1) Effective July 1, 2006, there is created the
8 Minority Contractors Technical Assistance Grant Program to be
9 administered by the Department of Management Services.

10 (2) The Legislature finds that there is a need for
11 minority construction enterprises to develop and execute a
12 viable, economically sound business plan and to improve
13 operational capacity. The Legislature further finds that such
14 contractors need technical assistance and support to develop
15 and strengthen their capacities in order to expand and provide
16 employment opportunities. The Legislature intends that the
17 Minority Contractors Technical Assistance Grant Program
18 support local organizations that will provide the needed
19 assistance and expertise to minority construction enterprises.

20 (3) The Department of Management Services shall:

21 (a) Publicize the availability of funds and the method
22 by which a person or organization may submit an application
23 for a minority contractors technical assistance grant.

24 (b) Develop a quality assurance process to monitor the
25 quality of educational and technical assistance services
26 delivered to minority contractor enterprises by recipients of
27 a technical assistance grant.

28 (c) Provide technical assistance, as requested, to the
29 minority contractors technical assistance grant recipients.

30 (d) Develop uniform data-reporting requirements for
31 economic development progress made in areas served by a grant

1 recipient in order to evaluate the performance of the projects
2 of the grant recipient.

3 (e) In cooperation with each grant recipient,
4 coordinate with public and private universities and colleges
5 to improve access for minority contractor enterprises to
6 professional staff in order to broaden the scope of expertise
7 available to minority construction enterprises.

8 (f) Ensure that appropriations from the Legislature
9 which are paid to a grant recipient are used by the grant
10 recipient in the manner and amount prescribed by the
11 Legislature.

12 (4) Each technical assistance grant recipient shall:

13 (a) Intensify efforts to increase the number of
14 minority enterprises in construction and construction-related
15 projects, with emphasis on construction projects financed by
16 federal, state, or local governments.

17 (b) In its efforts to increase the number of minority
18 construction enterprises, provide educational and technical
19 assistance to new and existing minority construction
20 enterprises in order to enable disadvantaged business firms to
21 develop sound construction business practices. The educational
22 and technical assistance must include, but need not be limited
23 to:

24 1. Bonding and capital assistance.
25 2. Leveraging financing from banking institutions.
26 3. Preparation and submission of construction-bid
27 packages.

28 4. Prebid services for planning, permitting, and
29 purchasing.

30 5. Postbid award services for production schedules,
31 payment requisitions, and dispute resolution.

1 (c) Work with Enterprise Florida, Inc.; the Florida
2 Black Business Investment Board, Inc.; state, municipal, and
3 county governments; and local economic development
4 organizations to promote the retention and expansion of
5 existing minority construction enterprises and to promote the
6 formation and recruitment of new minority construction firms.

7 (d) Facilitate the formation of minority construction
8 enterprises in communities that are not currently served by
9 such enterprises and establish, in communities that are not
10 currently served by an existing minority construction
11 enterprise, memoranda of understanding with local financial
12 institutions that will provide loan guarantees for loans to
13 minority construction enterprises.

14 (e) Develop memoranda of understanding with the
15 Department of Education, the Department of Transportation, the
16 Department of Community Affairs, and the Department of
17 Management Services, as well as with Workforce Florida, Inc.,
18 and the State Board of Education, detailing efforts of common
19 interest and collaborations to expand minority construction
20 business development.

21 (f) Prepare an annual report detailing the performance
22 of each minority construction enterprise receiving assistance
23 from a grant recipient, addressing the number of jobs created
24 or retained, success and failure rates among recipients of
25 technical assistance, and the amount of funds leveraged from
26 public and private sources.

27 (g) Provide for an annual financial audit as defined
28 in s. 11.45, Florida Statutes, of its accounts and records by
29 an independent certified public accountant. The audit report
30 shall be filed with the Department of Management Services no
31 later than 6 months after the end of the fiscal year of the

1 state. The department shall summarize the reports of all
2 recipients no later than 6 months after receipt of the
3 financial audits and shall submit the summary to the Governor,
4 the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of
5 Representatives, and the Auditor General.

6 (5) A minority contractors technical assistance grant
7 shall be in effect for 1 year and may be renewed for
8 additional years upon application to and approval by the
9 department, subject to meeting quality standards and outcomes
10 and subject to the availability of funds.

11 (6) The department may adopt rules necessary to
12 administer this section.

13 Section 2. The sum of \$2 million is appropriated from
14 the General Revenue Fund for the purpose of implementing this
15 act during the 2006-2007 fiscal year.

16 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2006.

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19 SENATE SUMMARY

20 Creates the Minority Contractors Technical Assistance
21 Grant Program to be administered by the Department of
22 Management Services. Provides the duties and
23 responsibilities of the department. Requires technical
24 assistance grant recipients to intensify efforts to
25 increase the number of minority enterprises in certain
26 construction and construction-related projects. Requires
27 technical grant recipients to provide educational and
28 technical assistance to new and existing minority
29 construction enterprises. Provides examples of technical
30 assistance and educational services to be offered to
31 minority construction enterprises. Requires each grant
recipient to prepare a report detailing the performance
of each minority construction enterprise receiving
assistance from the grant recipient. Provides an
appropriation.