

By Senator Gaetz

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Florida Research
3 Commercialization Matching Grant Program; creating s.
4 288.9552, F.S.; providing legislative findings and
5 intent; creating the program; designating an existing
6 committee, or subcommittee thereof, within Enterprise
7 Florida, Inc., for certain purposes; providing for
8 committee members to serve without compensation;
9 providing a deadline for processing applications;
10 requiring reports to the Governor and Legislature;
11 providing eligibility guidelines for applicants;
12 providing for a program administrator; providing
13 responsibilities of the program administrator;
14 providing for program administrative costs;
15 designating a fiduciary entity; specifying eligibility
16 requirements; providing for awards; requiring the
17 Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government
18 Accountability to conduct a review of the matching
19 grant program; requiring the office to submit a report
20 of its findings and recommendations to the Governor
21 and the Legislature; providing appropriations;
22 providing an effective date.

23
24 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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26 Section 1. Section 288.9552, Florida Statutes, is created
27 to read:

28 288.9552 Florida Research Commercialization Matching Grant
29 Program.

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(1) PURPOSE; GOALS AND OBJECTIVES; CREATION OF PROGRAM.—

(a) The purpose of the Florida Research Commercialization Matching Grant Program is to increase the amount of federal funding coming to this state which will produce the kind of distinctive technologies that drive today's knowledge-based economy. By leveraging federal, state, and private-sector resources, the program intends to accelerate the innovation process and more efficiently transform research results into products in the marketplace.

(b) The matching grant program is specifically intended to be a catalyst for small or startup companies that can take advantage of federal and state partnerships in order to accelerate their growth and market penetration by helping to overcome the funding gap faced by many small companies that are based in this state. Specific goals and objectives of the program include:

1. Increasing the amount of federal research moneys received by small businesses in this state through awards from the Small Business Innovation Research Program and the Small Business Technology Transfer Program of the Office of Technology of the United States Small Business Administration.

2. Accelerating the entry of new technology-based products into the marketplace.

3. Producing additional technology-based jobs for the state.

4. Providing leveraged resources to increase the effectiveness and success of applicants' projects.

5. Speeding commercialization of promising technologies.

6. Encouraging the establishment and growth of high-

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59 quality, advanced technology firms in the state.

60 7. Accelerating the rate of investment and enhancing the
61 state's investment infrastructure.

62 (c) The Florida Research Commercialization Matching Grant
63 Program is created for the purpose of accomplishing the goals
64 and objectives specified in this section.

65 (2) ADMINISTRATION.—Enterprise Florida's Technology,
66 Entrepreneurship and Capital Committee, or a subcommittee
67 thereof having no fewer than seven members, shall develop
68 programmatic policy, ensure statewide applicability of the
69 matching grant program, establish criteria for grant awards,
70 approve grant awards, and review program progress and results.

71 (a) Members of the committee shall serve without
72 compensation.

73 (b) Enterprise Florida, Inc., shall provide staff support
74 for the committee.

75 (c) Applications for matching grant awards must be reviewed
76 and approved or denied within 45 days after receipt of the
77 application.

78 (d) Beginning December 1, 2010, and annually thereafter,
79 the committee shall transmit an annual report to the Governor,
80 the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of
81 Representatives for the previous fiscal year.

82 (3) ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES.—A qualified applicant shall:

83 (a) Be a business entity that is registered with the
84 Secretary of State to operate in this state. The qualified
85 applicant must also have its primary office and a majority of
86 its employees domiciled in Florida, and the principal research
87 activities must be conducted in the state.

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88 (b) Be a small company for which a state matching grant is
89 necessary for project development and implementation.

90 (c) Have received a Phase I award under the federal Small
91 Business Innovation Research Program or Small Business
92 Technology Transfer Program and have received an invitation to
93 submit an application for a Phase II award. If a Phase II award
94 has already been issued, the end date of the federal award must
95 be identified and justification must be provided as to how these
96 additional funds will enhance, not supplant, the existing award.

97 (d) Use federal, local, and private resources to the
98 maximum extent possible. Total project funding shall
99 demonstrate:

100 1. Private-sector investments to offset the total cost of
101 the project; and

102 2. Not more than 25 percent of the project's total funding
103 is provided by the state grant.

104 (e) Conduct the project funded by the matching grant
105 program in this state.

106 (4) PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR.—Subject to appropriations,
107 Enterprise Florida, Inc., shall serve as program administrator.
108 Enterprise Florida, Inc., may contract for the performance of
109 technology review and related functions with a third party. Not
110 more than 10 percent of a legislative appropriation may be used
111 for administrative purposes. The responsibilities of the program
112 administrator include, but are not limited to:

113 (a) Coordinating and supporting the grant review, approval,
114 and contracting activities;

115 (b) Administering the grant-selection process, including,
116 but not limited to, issuing open-call requests for grant

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117 applications and receiving, reviewing, and processing grant
118 applications;

119 (c) Serving as grant contract manager for recipients of a
120 matching grant;

121 (d) Reporting program progress and results; and

122 (e) Establishing a mechanism by which information regarding
123 grant projects may be made available to facilitate additional
124 investment by individual investors, investment for early start-
125 up costs, or venture capital investment.

126 (5) FIDUCIARY.—Enterprise Florida, Inc., shall award money
127 to a qualified applicant if:

128 (a) The committee approves the award;

129 (b) The qualified applicant demonstrates that it has
130 obtained a Phase II award under the federal Small Business
131 Innovation Research Program or Small Business Technology
132 Transfer Program; and

133 (c) The qualified applicant executes a performance contract
134 with Enterprise Florida, Inc.

135
136 Enterprise Florida, Inc., shall release funds to a qualified
137 applicant upon completion of all contract requirements.

138 (6) AWARDS.—The matching grant program may make one-time
139 awards of up to \$250,000 per project to a qualified applicant.

140 Section 2. Before the 2012 Regular Session of the
141 Legislature, the Office of Program Policy Analysis and
142 Government Accountability shall conduct a review and evaluation
143 of the effectiveness and viability of the Florida Research
144 Commercialization Matching Grant Program. The office shall
145 specifically evaluate the use of federal grants and private

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146 investment and the creation of new businesses and jobs. The
147 office shall also recommend outcome measures for further
148 evaluation of the program. The office shall submit a report of
149 its findings and recommendations to the Governor, the President
150 of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives
151 by January 1, 2012.

152 Section 3. The recurring sum of \$4 million is appropriated
153 from the General Revenue Fund to Enterprise Florida, Inc., for
154 the 2009-2010, 2010-2011, and 2011-2012 fiscal years for the
155 purpose of implementing s. 288.9552, Florida Statutes.

156 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2009.