

1 A bill to be entitled

2 An act relating to homelessness; amending s. 420.606,
3 F.S.; revising legislative findings; requiring the
4 Department of Economic Opportunity to provide training
5 and technical assistance to certain designated lead
6 agencies of homeless assistance continuums of care;
7 requiring that the provision of such training and
8 assistance be delegated to certain nonprofit entities;
9 conforming provisions to changes made by the act;
10 amending s. 420.622, F.S.; requiring the department to
11 establish award levels for "Challenge Grants";
12 specifying criteria to determine award levels;
13 requiring the department, after consultation with the
14 Council on Homelessness, to specify a grant award
15 level in the notice of solicitation of grant
16 applications; revising qualifications for the grant;
17 specifying authorized uses of grant funds; requiring a
18 lead agency that receives a grant to submit a report
19 to the department; providing that funding authorized
20 pursuant to this act is subject to legislative
21 appropriation; providing an effective date.

22
23 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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25 Section 1. Subsections (1) through (3) of section 420.606,
26 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

27 420.606 Training and technical assistance program.—

28 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.—In addition to the legislative
 29 findings set forth in s. 420.6015, the Legislature finds and
 30 declares that:

31 (a) Housing in economically declining or distressed areas
 32 is frequently substandard and is often unaffordable or
 33 unavailable to homeless persons, very-low-income persons, and
 34 low-income persons;

35 (b) Community-based organizations often have limited
 36 experience in development of quality housing for homeless
 37 persons, very-low-income persons, and low-income persons in
 38 economically declining or distressed areas; ~~and~~

39 (c) The staffs and board members of community-based
 40 organizations need additional training in housing development as
 41 well as technical support to assist them in gaining the
 42 experience they need to better serve their communities; ~~and.~~

43 (d) The staffs of state agencies and local governments,
 44 whether directly involved in the production of affordable or
 45 available housing or acting in a supportive role, can better
 46 serve the goals of state and local governments if their
 47 expertise in housing development is expanded.

48 (2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to provide
 49 community-based organizations, ~~and~~ staff of state and local
 50 governments, and designated lead agencies of homeless assistance
 51 continuums of care with the necessary training and technical
 52 assistance to meet the needs of homeless persons, very-low-

53 income persons, low-income persons, and moderate-income persons
54 for standard, affordable housing.

55 (3) TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—The
56 Department of Economic Opportunity shall be responsible for
57 securing the necessary expertise to provide training and
58 technical assistance to:

59 (a) Staff of local governments, to staff of state
60 agencies, as appropriate, ~~and~~ to community-based organizations,
61 and to persons forming such organizations, which are formed for
62 the purpose of developing new housing and rehabilitating
63 existing housing that ~~which~~ is affordable for very-low-income
64 persons, low-income persons, and moderate-income persons.

65 1.~~(a)~~ The training component of the program shall be
66 designed to build the housing development capacity of community-
67 based organizations and local governments as a permanent
68 resource for the benefit of communities in this state.

69 a.1.~~1.~~ The scope of training must ~~shall~~ include, but need
70 not be limited to, real estate development skills related to
71 affordable housing, including the construction process and
72 property management and disposition, the development of public-
73 private partnerships to reduce housing costs, model housing
74 projects, and management and board responsibilities of
75 community-based organizations.

76 b.2.~~2.~~ Training activities may include, but are not limited
77 to, materials for self-instruction, workshops, seminars,
78 internships, coursework, and special programs developed in

79 conjunction with state universities and community colleges.

80 ~~2.(b)~~ The technical assistance component of the program
 81 shall be designed to assist applicants for state-administered
 82 programs in developing applications and in expediting project
 83 implementation. Technical assistance activities for the staffs
 84 of community-based organizations and local governments who are
 85 directly involved in the production of affordable housing may
 86 include, but are not limited to, workshops for program
 87 applicants, onsite visits, guidance in achieving project
 88 completion, and a newsletter to community-based organizations
 89 and local governments.

90 (b) Designated lead agencies of homeless assistance
 91 continuums of care which receive operating or other support
 92 under s. 420.9073(7) from the Department of Children and
 93 Families to provide or secure housing, programs, and other
 94 services for homeless persons. Such training and technical
 95 assistance must be provided by a nonprofit entity that meets the
 96 requirements for providing training and technical assistance
 97 under s. 420.531.

98 Section 2. Subsection (4) of section 420.622, Florida
 99 Statutes, is amended to read:

100 420.622 State Office on Homelessness; Council on
 101 Homelessness.—

102 ~~(4) Not less than 120 days after the effective date of~~
 103 ~~this act,~~ The State Office on Homelessness, with the concurrence
 104 of the Council on Homelessness, may accept and administer moneys

105 appropriated to it to provide annual "Challenge Grants" ~~annually~~
106 to lead agencies of ~~for~~ homeless assistance continuums of care
107 designated by the State Office on Homelessness pursuant to s.
108 420.624. ~~A lead agency may be a local homeless coalition,~~
109 ~~municipal or county government, or other public agency or~~
110 ~~private, not-for-profit corporation.~~ The department shall
111 establish varying levels of grant awards ~~Such grants may be up~~
112 to \$500,000 per lead agency. Award levels shall be based upon
113 the total population within the continuum of care catchment area
114 and reflect the differing degrees of homelessness in the
115 catchment planning areas. The department, in consultation with
116 the Council on Homelessness, shall specify a grant award level
117 in the notice of the solicitation of grant applications.

118 (a) To qualify for the grant, a lead agency must develop
119 and implement a local homeless assistance continuum of care plan
120 for its designated catchment area. The continuum of care plan
121 must implement a coordinated assessment or central intake system
122 to screen, assess, and refer persons seeking assistance to the
123 appropriate service provider. The lead agency shall also
124 document the commitment of local government and private
125 organizations to provide matching funds in an amount equal to
126 the grant requested.

127 (b) Preference must be given to those lead agencies that
128 have demonstrated the ability of their continuum of care to
129 provide quality services to homeless persons and the ability to
130 leverage federal homeless-assistance funding under the Stewart

131 B. McKinney Act and private funding for the provision of
132 services to homeless persons.

133 (c) Preference must be given to lead agencies in catchment
134 areas with the greatest need for the provision of housing and
135 services to the homeless, relative to the population of the
136 catchment area.

137 (d) The grant may be used to fund any of the housing,
138 program, or service needs included in the local homeless
139 assistance continuum of care plan. The lead agency may allocate
140 the grant to programs, services, or housing providers that
141 implement the local homeless assistance continuum care plan. The
142 lead agency may provide subgrants to a local agency to implement
143 programs or services or provide housing identified for funding
144 in the lead agency's application to the department. A lead
145 agency may spend a maximum of 8 percent of its funding on
146 administrative costs.

147 (e) The lead agency shall submit a final report to the
148 department documenting the outcomes achieved by the grant in
149 enabling persons who are homeless to return to permanent housing
150 thereby ending such person's episode of homelessness.

151 Section 3. Funding authorized pursuant to this act is
152 subject to legislative appropriation.

153 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2014.