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SENATE BILL 5146

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State of Washington

63rd Legislature

2013 Regular Session

By Senators Frockt, Litzow, Mullet, Kohl-Welles, Ranker, Dammeier, Harper, Darneille, Shin, Tom, Rolfes, and Kline

Read first time 01/21/13. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to a competitive grant program for informal  
2 science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education; and adding  
3 a new section to chapter 43.330 RCW.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 43.330 RCW  
6 to read as follows:

7 (1) The legislature finds that investing in institutions involved  
8 in providing early opportunities for informal science, technology,  
9 engineering, and mathematics education are key to engaging future  
10 generations in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics  
11 careers.

12 (2) A competitive grant program to assist nonprofit organizations  
13 in acquiring, constructing, or rehabilitating science or technology  
14 center, zoo, and aquarium facilities is created. A facility for a  
15 science or technology center must be for an organization that meets the  
16 requirements to be a member of the association of science and  
17 technology centers. A facility for a zoo or aquarium must be an  
18 organization accredited by the association of zoos and aquariums.

1 Qualifying organizations must provide school programs that meet the  
2 essential academic learning requirements in RCW 28A.655.070.

3 (3)(a) The department shall submit a list of recommended projects  
4 eligible for funding to the governor and the legislature in the  
5 department's biennial capital budget request beginning with the 2015-  
6 2017 biennium and thereafter.

7 (b) The list, in priority order, must include a description of each  
8 project, the amount of recommended state funding, and documentation of  
9 nonstate funds to be used for the project. The total amount of  
10 recommended state funding for projects on a biennial project list may  
11 not exceed ten million dollars.

12 (4) The department shall establish a competitive process to  
13 prioritize applications for state assistance as follows:

14 (a) The department shall conduct a statewide solicitation of  
15 project applications from nonprofit organizations and local governments  
16 as determined by the department.

17 (b) The department shall evaluate and rank applications in  
18 consultation with a citizen advisory committee using objective  
19 criteria. The evaluation and ranking process must also consider local  
20 community support for projects, a project timeline, and an examination  
21 of existing assets that applicants may apply to projects.

22 (5) As needed for the purposes of subsection (4)(b) of this  
23 section, the department shall establish an advisory committee that  
24 includes:

25 (a) A university faculty member specializing in science education;

26 (b) A representative from a state science or technology industry;

27 (c) A representative of the Washington tourism alliance; and

28 (d) Representatives of pre-K and K-12 educators.

29 (6) The department may establish the amount of state grant  
30 assistance for individual project applications but the amount may not  
31 exceed twenty percent of the estimated total capital cost or actual  
32 cost of a project or two million dollars, whichever is less. The  
33 remaining portions of the project capital cost must be a match from  
34 nonstate sources. The nonstate match may include cash, the value of  
35 real property when acquired solely for the purpose of the project, and  
36 in-kind contributions. The department may set matching requirements  
37 for individual projects.

1           (7) State assistance may be used to fund separate definable phases  
2 of a project if the project demonstrates adequate progress and has  
3 secured the necessary match funding.

4           (8) The department shall not sign contracts or otherwise  
5 financially obligate funds under this section until the legislature has  
6 approved a specific list of projects. In contracts for grants  
7 authorized under this section, the department must include provisions  
8 requiring that capital improvements be held by the grantee for a  
9 specified period of time appropriate to the amount of the grant and  
10 that facilities be used for the express purpose of the grant. If the  
11 grantee is found to be out of compliance with provisions of the  
12 contract, the grantee must repay to the state general fund the  
13 principal amount of the grant plus interest calculated at the rate of  
14 interest on state of Washington general obligation bonds issued most  
15 closely to the date of authorization of the grant.

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