
**Technology & Economic Development
Committee**

HB 2833

Brief Description: Transferring duties of the life sciences discovery fund.

Sponsors: Representatives Morris, Schmick and Hudgins.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Transfers certain duties and powers of the Life Science Discovery Fund Authority (Authority) to the Department of Commerce (Department).
- Directs the Department to designate a statewide nonprofit organization with a life science focus to receive funds previously allocated to the Life Science Discovery Fund (Fund) to grow the life science sector and improve the health of the state's residents.

Hearing Date: 1/24/18

Staff: Kirsten Lee (786-7133).

Background:

In 2005 the Life Sciences Discovery Fund (Fund) was created to promote life science research in Washington. The Life Sciences Discovery Fund Authority (Authority) was created and empowered to leverage revenues from the Fund, which included transfers made by the Legislature from Strategic Contribution Payments deposited into the Tobacco Settlement Account and other private and public sources, to provide grant opportunities to support life sciences research and development. The Fund received contribution payments from 2008 through 2017.

The Fund was managed by the Authority, which was governed by a board of trustees consisting of four legislators and seven members appointed by the Governor. The Authority solicited and reviewed grant applications until funding ceased in 2017. Under the Authority's granting

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conditions, some grantees will be required to make payments back to the Fund for certain occurrences, including the commercialization or licensing of products or programs developed as a result of a grant.

Summary of Bill:

Certain Fund-related powers and duties are transferred from the Authority to the Department of Commerce (Department). The Department may execute contracts on behalf of the Authority and manage and collect monies in the Fund. Additionally, the limited liability provisions previously applied to the Authority, its board members, and the state, apply to the Department.

The Department is required to contract with a statewide nonprofit organization to provide services and grants to entities to foster growth of the state's life science sector and health of the state's residents, and to receive funds previously administered by the Authority. The organization must adopt policies and procedures to facilitate future life science-related grant making, and must adhere to certain criteria for the issuance of any future grants. The Department may also contract with this organization to monitor and collect Fund-issued grant payback funds.

The Department is authorized to make expenditures from the Fund for the purpose of transferring the funds to a statewide nonprofit organization. The Department may expend additional amounts from the Fund for its administrative costs, which are limited to actual costs incurred by the Department to designate the organization and to monitor and collect grant payback funds.

In addition to the state, the Department is not liable for any loss, damage, or harm resulting from grants made by the Authority or any life science research funded by such a grant.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on July 1, 2018.