

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1175 Session of
1997

INTRODUCED BY VITALI, WALKO, LAUGHLIN, PESCI, MELIO, GRUITZA,
SCRIMENTI, GORDNER, BROWNE, KREBS, ITKIN, STEELMAN, MUNDY,
DeLUCA, TANGRETTI, C. WILLIAMS, STURLA, CURRY AND EVANS,
APRIL 23, 1997

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, APRIL 23, 1997

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.177, No.175), entitled
2 "An act providing for and reorganizing the conduct of the
3 executive and administrative work of the Commonwealth by the
4 Executive Department thereof and the administrative
5 departments, boards, commissions, and officers thereof,
6 including the boards of trustees of State Normal Schools, or
7 Teachers Colleges; abolishing, creating, reorganizing or
8 authorizing the reorganization of certain administrative
9 departments, boards, and commissions; defining the powers and
10 duties of the Governor and other executive and administrative
11 officers, and of the several administrative departments,
12 boards, commissions, and officers; fixing the salaries of the
13 Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and certain other executive
14 and administrative officers; providing for the appointment of
15 certain administrative officers, and of all deputies and
16 other assistants and employes in certain departments, boards,
17 and commissions; and prescribing the manner in which the
18 number and compensation of the deputies and all other
19 assistants and employes of certain departments, boards and
20 commissions shall be determined," establishing procedures for
21 the awarding of grants.

22 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
23 hereby enacts as follows:

24 Section 1. The act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.177, No.175), known
25 as The Administrative Code of 1929, is amended by adding a
26 section to read:

Section 531. Procedures for Grants.--(a) The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

(1) Commonwealth grant programs such as the Legislative Initiative WAM Program and the Community Revitalization Program have come under the criticism that awards have been made on the basis of politics rather than merit and need.

(2) The perception that grants are awarded on the basis of politics has served to erode public confidence in State government.

(3) All applicants for Commonwealth grants have a right to compete on a level playing field for limited grant moneys.

(4) The awarding of grants on a merit and need basis will put our tax dollars to their best use.

(5) Additional procedural requirements are needed to insure that Commonwealth grants are awarded on a merit and need basis.

(6) These additional procedural requirements include:

(i) Advertising, so that all potential grant applicants are made aware of the availability of grant money.

(ii) Filing time periods, so that competing applications can be compared to one another.

(iii) Regulations which specifically delineate merit and need criteria.

(iv) Full public disclosure of the grant award process, so the public can be assured that grants are awarded in a fair and impartial manner.

(b) Unless the statute which establishes the grant program specifically provides for a different procedure, the procedures in this section shall apply to every grant program which is established, implemented or administered by any department or commission subject to the provisions of this act.

1 (c) At least one hundred twenty (120) days prior to the
2 initial date for the acceptance of applications for the grants,
3 the department or commission shall, at a minimum, provide notice
4 of the grant program as follows:

5 (1) Advertisement in the Pennsylvania Bulletin.

6 (2) Circulars mailed to municipalities, when potential grant
7 applicants are municipalities.

8 (3) Posting on the State Government Home Page on the
9 Internet.

10 (d) The notice required under subsection (c) shall include
11 all of the following:

12 (1) The purpose for which the grants are made.

13 (2) The source of grant applications.

14 (3) The name, address and telephone number of the contact
15 person responsible for the administration of the grants.

16 (4) The total amount of public funds available for the
17 particular grant program.

18 (5) The initial date and the closing date for the acceptance
19 of applications for the grants.

20 (e) The department or commission shall establish filing time
21 periods for applicants competing for a specific pool of grant
22 money.

23 (f) All awards shall be made solely on the basis of the
24 merits of the project and the needs of the applicant. The
25 department or commission shall publish guidelines which clearly
26 delineate merit and need criteria for the awarding of grants.

27 (g) The following information shall be made available for
28 public inspection and photocopying as soon as practicable:

29 (1) All submitted grant applications.

30 (2) Finalized grant contracts.

1 (3) Logging and summary information compiled by the
2 department or commission.

3 The cost to the public of the photocopying shall be reasonable,
4 not to exceed the actual cost to the department or commission.

5 (h) All grant applications and award checks shall be
6 dispersed solely by the department or commission and directly to
7 the potential applicants and recipients.

8 Section 2. This act shall apply to all grants made on or
9 after July 1, 1997.

10 Section 3. This act shall take effect immediately.