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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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SENATE BILL

No. 556 Session of  
2019

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INTRODUCED BY HUGHES, FONTANA, FARNESE, SANTARSIERO AND  
BREWSTER, JUNE 5, 2019

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REFERRED TO EDUCATION, JUNE 5, 2019

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AN ACT

1 Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An  
2 act relating to the public school system, including certain  
3 provisions applicable as well to private and parochial  
4 schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the  
5 laws relating thereto," providing for the Public School  
6 Building Emergency Repair and Renovation Grant Program;  
7 establishing the Public School Building Emergency Repair and  
8 Renovation Grant Fund; and making an appropriation.

9 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
10 hereby enacts as follows:

11 Section 1. The act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known  
12 as the Public School Code of 1949, is amended by adding an  
13 article to read:

14 ARTICLE VII-A

15 PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDING EMERGENCY REPAIR AND RENOVATION GRANT

16 PROGRAM

17 Section 701-A. Scope.

18 This article relates to the Public School Building Emergency  
19 Repair and Renovation Grant Program.

20 Section 702-A. Definitions.

21 The following words and phrases when used in this article

1 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the  
2 context clearly indicates otherwise:

3 "Department." The Department of Education of the  
4 Commonwealth.

5 "Eligible cost." The term includes the cost of all labor,  
6 materials, necessary operational machinery and equipment, plans  
7 and specifications, surveys, prefeasibility studies, engineering  
8 and other professional services related to an emergency repair  
9 and renovation project.

10 "Emergency repair and renovation projects." Eligible costs  
11 associated with the improvement, repair, rehabilitation or  
12 renovation of all or part of a public school building, which  
13 include the following:

14 (1) Emergency repairs resulting from a natural or  
15 manmade disaster.

16 (2) Lead abatement, remediation and removal.

17 (3) Asbestos abatement, remediation and removal.

18 (4) Heating, ventilation and air conditioning purchase,  
19 repair or replacement.

20 (5) Electrical system repair or replacement.

21 (6) Roof and window repair or replacement.

22 (7) Plumbing repairs or replacement.

23 (8) Purchase, repair or replacement of indoor air  
24 quality systems.

25 (9) Removal of the presence of toxins, chemicals and  
26 health hazards, including mercury, radon, PCBs, mold, mildew,  
27 rodents and pests.

28 (10) Repairs or renovations that ensure the building  
29 envelopes of public school buildings protect occupants and  
30 interiors from the elements and are structurally sound and

1 secure.

2 (11) Repairs or renovations that ensure the safety of  
3 drinking water and water used for meal preparation in public  
4 school buildings, which may include testing of the potability  
5 of water for the presence of lead and other contaminants.

6 (12) Repairs or renovations that bring public school  
7 facilities into compliance with applicable fire, health and  
8 safety codes.

9 (13) Other improvements, actions, repairs or renovations  
10 that will improve the physical health, welfare and safety of  
11 students as approved by the department.

12 "Fund." The Public School Building Emergency Repair and  
13 Renovation Grant Fund established under section 704-A.

14 Section 703-A. Public School Building Emergency Repair and  
15 Renovation Grant Program.

16 (a) Establishment.--The Public School Building Emergency  
17 Repair and Renovation Grant Program is established and shall be  
18 administered by the department.

19 (b) Application.--A school district may submit a single  
20 application in writing to the department which identifies each  
21 project for which grant funding is requested under this section.  
22 The department may establish the form and manner in which an  
23 application is submitted.

24 (c) Requirements of application.--An application submitted  
25 under subsection (b) shall include:

26 (1) A detailed plan of each emergency repair and  
27 renovation project for which the school district is seeking  
28 funding.

29 (2) The total amount of grant funding requested.

30 (3) A statement indicating that the emergency repair and

1 renovation project is necessary to protect the health and  
2 safety of the students in the school district.

3 (4) Any other information required by the department.

4 (d) Review.--Within 30 days of receipt of an application,  
5 the department shall review and approve or deny the application.  
6 If the application is approved, the department shall award the  
7 grant and execute a grant agreement with the school district. If  
8 the application is denied, the department shall forward the  
9 reasons for denial to the applicant and allow the applicant to  
10 reapply.

11 Section 704-A. Public School Building Emergency Repair and  
12 Renovation Grant Fund.

13 There is established in the State Treasury a special fund to  
14 be known as the Public School Building Emergency Repair and  
15 Renovation Grant Fund.

16 Section 705-A. Use of money.

17 (a) Grants.--Money in the fund may only be used for grants  
18 to school districts for emergency repair and renovation projects  
19 approved under section 703-A(d).

20 (b) Distribution.--Money in the fund shall be distributed as  
21 follows:

22 (1) The sum of \$85,000,000 shall be allocated for grants  
23 for emergency repair and renovation projects in a school  
24 district of the first class.

25 (2) The sum of \$30,000,000 shall be used for grants for  
26 emergency repair and renovation projects in school districts  
27 which are in one of the following categories:

28 (i) In financial recovery status under of Article  
29 VI-A, Subarticle (c).

30 (ii) In financial watch status under of Article VI-

1 A, Subarticle (b).

2 (iii) With 20% of school-age children identified as  
3 in acute poverty by the American Community Survey data,  
4 as used in section 2502.53.

5 (3) The sum of \$10,000,000 shall be used for grants for  
6 emergency repair and renovation projects in school districts  
7 other than those identified in paragraphs (1) and (2).

8 (c) Prohibition.--The department may not award grants for  
9 any of the following purposes:

10 (1) Construction of a new public school building.

11 (2) Payment of maintenance costs other than those  
12 allowed in this article.

13 (3) Purchase, lease or upgrade of school district  
14 vehicles.

15 (4) Improvement of a stand-alone facility which is not  
16 used for the purpose of educating children, including  
17 administrative or operations buildings or logistical support  
18 facilities.

19 (d) Guidelines.--The department shall develop guidelines for  
20 the following:

21 (1) Submitting applications for a grant.

22 (2) Reviewing applications and selecting projects for  
23 the awarding of grants.

24 (3) Eligible uses of money by school districts that  
25 receive grants.

26 (4) Minimum grant amounts.

27 Section 706-A. Amount of grant.

28 Maximum grant amounts for a school district shall be as  
29 follows:

30 (1) For school districts under section 705-A(b)(2),

1       \$2,000,000.

2           (2) For school districts under section 705-A(b) (3),

3       \$500,000.

4 Section 707-A. Deposit and transfer of money.

5       On or before December 1, 2019, the sum of \$125,000,000 shall

6 be transferred from the General Fund for deposit into the fund

7 for purposes of awarding grants under this article.

8       Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.