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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTY-NINTH SESSION

H. F. No. 1249

02/25/2015 Authored by Hamilton

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Job Growth and Energy Affordability Policy and Finance

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to housing; creating a grant program for modification or improvements
1.3 to homes of people over the age of 65 and people with disabilities; appropriating
1.4 money.

1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.6 Section 1. APPROPRIATION; GRANTS FOR ACCESSIBILITY HOME
1.7 MODIFICATIONS.

1.8 Subdivision 1. Definitions. (a) For purposes of this section, the following terms
1.9 have the meanings given, unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

1.10 (b) "Accommodate" means to make a residence accessible for a qualified person in a
1.11 manner that is necessary because the qualified person has a disability or that is necessary
1.12 because the qualified person is 65 or older and has a disability or another physical limit.

1.13 (c) "Federal poverty guidelines" means the federal poverty guidelines published by
1.14 the United States Department of Health and Human Services most recently before the first
1.15 day of the calendar year in which the taxable year began.

1.16 (d) "Medical provider" means a physician, licensed under Minnesota Statutes,
1.17 chapter 147, or a primary care provider as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 148.171,
1.18 subdivision 17a.

1.19 (e) "Qualified modifications or improvements" means modifications or improvements
1.20 to the taxpayer's principal residence, as used in section 121 of the Internal Revenue Code
1.21 and located in this state, to accommodate a qualified person and must:

1.22 (1) consist of one or more of the following:

1.23 (i) no-step exterior entrances;

1.24 (ii) exterior or interior ramps;

- 2.1 (iii) stairway lifts;
 2.2 (iv) elevators;
 2.3 (v) lifts;
 2.4 (vi) handrails;
 2.5 (vii) grab bars or reinforcement of grab bars;
 2.6 (viii) door hardware;
 2.7 (ix) widening exterior doors to more than 36 inches;
 2.8 (x) widening interior doors to more than 32 inches;
 2.9 (xi) widening hallways to more than 36 inches;
 2.10 (xii) fire or smoke alarms;
 2.11 (xiii) alerting devices;
 2.12 (xiv) moving electrical service including, but not limited to, outlets and switches;
 2.13 (xv) environmental controls including, but not limited to, heating and cooling
 2.14 equipment;
 2.15 (xvi) bathroom modifications including, but not limited to, accessible toilets,
 2.16 bathtubs, showers, plumbing, and fixtures;
 2.17 (xvii) kitchen modifications including, but not limited to, accessible countertops,
 2.18 cabinets, appliances, plumbing, and fixtures; and
 2.19 (xviii) bedroom modifications including, but not limited to, relocation to an
 2.20 accessible space in the home;
 2.21 (2) be certified by a medical provider as necessary to accommodate the qualified
 2.22 person's use of the residence;
 2.23 (3) consist of improvements to real property following their installation; and
 2.24 (4) not be the construction of a new residence or an addition to a residence that
 2.25 expands its living area beyond the items in clause (1).
 2.26 (f) "Qualified person" means a taxpayer, the taxpayer's spouse, or the taxpayer's
 2.27 dependent, as defined in section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code, who has attained
 2.28 the age of 65 before the close of the taxable year or who has a disability, as defined in
 2.29 Minnesota Statutes, section 363A.03, subdivision 12.
- 2.30 Subd. 2. **Grants; eligibility.** The commissioner of housing finance shall provide
 2.31 grants to qualified persons for qualified modifications and improvements to accommodate
 2.32 their home. The grants shall be available to homeowners whose annual income is less
 2.33 than 450 percent of the federal poverty guidelines. The homeowner must provide
 2.34 documentation from a medical provider that modifications and improvements are
 2.35 necessary to accommodate the qualified person.

3.1 Subd. 3. **Appropriation.** \$2,000,000 in fiscal year 2016 and \$2,000,000 in fiscal
3.2 year 2017 are appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner of the Housing
3.3 Finance Agency for grants pursuant to this section to homeowners to accommodate
3.4 qualified persons who need qualified modifications or improvements to their homes due
3.5 to age or disability. A percentage of this amount may be used by the Housing Finance
3.6 Agency for the administration of the grants program.