

STATE OF MAINE

—  
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD  
TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-ONE

—  
S.P. 200 - L.D. 492

**An Act To Create a Regional Grant Program To Help Rural Businesses Find Qualified Staff**

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

**Sec. 1. 5 MRSA §13056-I** is enacted to read:

**§13056-I. Rural Workforce Recruitment and Retention Grant Program**

**1. Program established.** The Rural Workforce Recruitment and Retention Grant Program, referred to in this section as "the program," is established within the department to provide grants for local economic development initiatives in rural regions of the State that will assist rural businesses in those regions in locating, recruiting and retaining qualified staff to meet workforce needs. For the purpose of this section, "rural regions of the State" means Aroostook County, Piscataquis County, Somerset County and Washington County.

**2. Fund established.** The Rural Workforce Recruitment and Retention Grant Fund, referred to in this section as "the fund," is established as a nonlapsing fund within the department for the purpose of providing funds for the program. The fund consists of money appropriated to the fund by the Legislature and any funds received by the department for the purposes of the program.

**3. Rulemaking.** The department shall establish by rule the criteria for eligibility for grants from the program and the process of application. The rules must require that an entity receiving a grant for an initiative secure matching funds for the initiative on a one-to-one basis. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

**4. Reporting.** The department shall report by January 15th of each year to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over economic development matters on the program, including the number of grants given and the results achieved.

**Sec. 2. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and allocations are made.

**ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, DEPARTMENT OF**

**Rural Workforce Recruitment and Retention Grant Fund N363**

Initiative: Provides base allocations to authorize the expenditure of any funds received from outside sources to provide grants for local economic development initiatives in rural regions of the State.

	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>
<b>OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS</b>		
All Other	\$500	\$500
<b>OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS TOTAL</b>	<u>\$500</u>	<u>\$500</u>

**Rural Workforce Recruitment and Retention Grant Fund N363**

Initiative: Provides one-time funds of \$200,000 in fiscal year 2021-22 and fiscal year 2022-23 only for eligible local economic development initiatives to advertise and promote jobs in rural regions of the State and to locate and retain qualified staff. Funding appropriated to this program does not lapse but must be carried forward into the next fiscal year to be used only for the purpose for which it was provided.

	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>
<b>GENERAL FUND</b>		
All Other	\$200,000	\$200,000
<b>GENERAL FUND TOTAL</b>	<u>\$200,000</u>	<u>\$200,000</u>

**ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT, DEPARTMENT OF  
DEPARTMENT TOTALS**

	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>
<b>GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>
<b>OTHER SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS</b>	<b>\$500</b>	<b>\$500</b>
<b>DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS</b>	<u><b>\$200,500</b></u>	<u><b>\$200,500</b></u>