

By: N. Gonzalez of El Paso

H.B. No. 1451

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a program encouraging credit unions to make microloans to victims of domestic violence.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter B, Chapter 15, Finance Code, is amended by adding Section 15.104 to read as follows:

Sec. 15.104. MICROLOANS FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.

(a) In this section, "victim of domestic violence" means a person who in the preceding two years has been found by a court, as evidenced by a court order, to have been the victim of domestic violence.

(b) The department shall establish and administer a program to encourage credit unions to make microloans to victims of domestic violence to encourage entrepreneurship by those victims.

(c) In administering the program, the department shall:

(1) initiate partnerships or other collaborative efforts between credit unions and community-based domestic violence programs to:

(A) identify potential borrowers who are victims of domestic violence and refer those potential borrowers to credit unions that offer microloans; and

(B) provide financial education training to victims of domestic violence receiving services from the programs; and

1 (2) coordinate with credit unions with respect to
2 materials and resources for the training provided under Subdivision
3 (1)(B).

4 (d) The department shall seek gifts, grants, and other
5 funding sources for the program.

6 SECTION 2. Section 481.0068, Government Code, is amended by
7 amending Subsection (b) and adding Subsection (c) to read as
8 follows:

9 (b) The Office of Small Business Assistance shall:

10 (1) examine the role of small and historically
11 underutilized businesses in the state's economy and the
12 contribution of small and historically underutilized businesses in
13 generating economic activity, expanding employment opportunities,
14 promoting exports, stimulating innovation and entrepreneurship,
15 and bringing new and untested products and services to the
16 marketplace;

17 (2) serve as the principal focal point in the state for
18 small and historically underutilized businesses by:

19 (A) providing to the legislature information on
20 the effects of proposed policies or actions;

21 (B) assisting state agencies in determining the
22 impact proposed rules have on small businesses as required by
23 Section 2006.002; and

24 (C) assisting the agencies in reducing the
25 adverse effect that rules have on small businesses, if appropriate;

26 (3) evaluate the effectiveness of efforts of state
27 agencies and other entities to assist small and historically

1 underutilized businesses and make appropriate recommendations to
2 the legislature and state agencies to assist the development and
3 strengthening of small and historically underutilized businesses;

4 (4) identify regulations that inhibit small and
5 historically underutilized business development and to the extent
6 possible identify conflicting state policy goals;

7 (5) determine the availability of financial and other
8 resources to small and historically underutilized businesses and
9 recommend methods for:

10 (A) increasing the availability of equity
11 capital and other forms of financial assistance to small and
12 historically underutilized businesses;

13 (B) generating markets for the goods and services
14 of small and historically underutilized businesses;

15 (C) providing more effective education,
16 training, and management and technical assistance to small and
17 historically underutilized businesses; and

18 (D) providing assistance to small and
19 historically underutilized businesses in complying with federal,
20 state, and local laws;

21 (6) identify the reasons for small and historically
22 underutilized business successes and failures, ascertain the
23 related factors that are particularly important in this state, and
24 recommend actions for increasing the success rate of small and
25 historically underutilized businesses;

26 (7) serve as a focal point for receiving comments and
27 suggestions concerning state government policies and activities

1 that affect small and historically underutilized businesses;

2 (8) develop and suggest proposals for changes in state
3 policies and activities that adversely affect small and
4 historically underutilized businesses;

5 (9) provide to state agencies information on the
6 effects of proposed policies or actions that affect small and
7 historically underutilized businesses;

8 (10) provide information and assistance relating to
9 establishing, operating, or expanding small and historically
10 underutilized businesses;

11 (11) assist small and historically underutilized
12 businesses by:

13 (A) identifying:

14 (i) sources of financial assistance for
15 those businesses; and

16 (ii) financial barriers to those
17 businesses;

18 (B) working with relevant organizations to
19 identify financing programs that aid small businesses in overcoming
20 financial barriers;

21 (C) matching those businesses with sources of
22 financial assistance and credit enhancement; and

23 (D) assisting those businesses with the
24 preparation of applications for government loans, loan guarantees,
25 and credit enhancement programs;

26 (12) sponsor meetings, to the extent practicable in
27 cooperation with public and private educational institutions, to

1 provide training and disseminate information beneficial to small
2 and historically underutilized businesses;

3 (13) assist small and historically underutilized
4 businesses in their dealings with federal, state, and local
5 governmental agencies and provide information regarding
6 governmental requirements affecting small and historically
7 underutilized businesses;

8 (14) perform research, studies, and analyses of
9 matters affecting the interests of small and historically
10 underutilized businesses;

11 (15) use available resources within the state, such as
12 small business development centers, educational institutions, and
13 nonprofit associations, to coordinate the provision of management
14 and technical assistance to small and historically underutilized
15 businesses in a systematic manner;

16 (16) publish newsletters, brochures, and other
17 documents containing information useful to small and historically
18 underutilized businesses;

19 (17) identify successful small and historically
20 underutilized business assistance programs provided by other
21 states and determine the feasibility of adapting those programs for
22 implementation in this state;

23 (18) establish an outreach program to make the
24 existence of the office known to small and historically
25 underutilized businesses and potential clients throughout the
26 state;

27 (19) enlist the cooperation and assistance of public

1 and private agencies, businesses, and other organizations in
2 disseminating information about the programs and services provided
3 by the state that benefit small businesses and how small businesses
4 can participate in or make use of those programs and services;

5 (20) defer to the small business compliance assistance
6 program as defined by Section 5.135, Water Code, on advocacy and
7 technical assistance related to environmental programs that
8 regulate small businesses;

9 (21) develop a "one-stop" approach for all small
10 business needs, including competitive activity with state agencies
11 and political subdivisions; ~~and~~

12 (22) perform any other functions necessary to carry
13 out the purposes of this section; and

14 (23) collaborate with community-based domestic
15 violence programs to provide information and assistance to victims
16 of domestic violence receiving services from the program who are
17 interested in establishing a small business, including any
18 assistance available through the federal Small Business
19 Administration.

20 (c) In this section, "victim of domestic violence" means a
21 person who in the preceding two years has been found by a court, as
22 evidenced by a court order, to have been the victim of domestic
23 violence.

24 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
25 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
26 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
27 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this

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1 Act takes effect September 1, 2013.