

SENATE BILL NO. 223

INTRODUCED BY J. ESP

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT PROVIDING FOR ~~THE~~ A PORTION OF THE INTEREST AND INCOME EARNED FROM WORKFORCE HOUSING APPROPRIATIONS TO BE RETAINED; AMENDING SECTION 15, CHAPTER 774, LAWS OF 2023; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE AND A RETROACTIVE APPLICABILITY DATE."

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

Section 1. Section 15, Chapter 774, Laws of 2023, is amended to read:

"Section 15. Workforce housing appropriations -- eligible uses of funds. (1) There is appropriated \$12 million from the general fund to the board of investments for the biennium beginning July 1, 2023. The purpose of the funds is to advance the construction or purchase of workforce housing of employees who work at state-owned facilities that house state inmates or behavioral health patients.

(2) Funds must be distributed to assist those who work and are living in counties that have a population of less than 15,000 inhabitants that are located within a 30-mile radius of a state-owned facility that, on an annual average, houses at least 100 state inmates or behavioral health patients, and the state-owned facility is located in a county that has a population that does not exceed 15,000 inhabitants. The distribution must be made pro rata based on the annual average state-owned facility population for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2021, and the number of workers residing in each eligible county.

(3) Eligible uses of the funds include:

- (a) buying down construction costs on employee housing;
- (b) providing matching funds required pursuant to the state workforce housing community reinvestment organization revolving loan fund;
- (c) providing loans for up to 50% of the projected project cost of an eligible infrastructure project pursuant to [section 13];
- (d) providing funds to discount housing costs to employees who work in state-owned facilities that

house, on an annual average, at least 100 state inmates or behavioral health patients, and the state-owned facility is located in a county that has a population that does not exceed 15,000 inhabitants; or

(e) acquiring through construction or purchase housing for employees of those state-owned facilities with the intention of the housing to be privately owned within 10 years of purchase or construction unless private ownership is considered a security risk by the department of public health and human services or the department of corrections.

(4) (a) All-Fifty percent of the interest and income earned from the funds appropriated each year as provided in subsection (1) must be retained in the fund and the remainder must be deposited into the general fund.

(b) The portion of interest and income retained in the fund may only be used for workforce housing as provided under this section."

NEW SECTION. Section 2. Effective date. [This act] is effective on passage and approval.

NEW SECTION. Section 3. Retroactive applicability. [This act] applies retroactively, within the meaning of 1-2-109, to interest and income earned on or after June 14, 2023.

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