

Introduced by

Representatives Warrey, Bosch

Senator Klein

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 54-60 of the North Dakota
2 Century Code, relating to the creation of an office of entrepreneurship; to provide for a
3 legislative management report; and to provide an appropriation.

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

5 **SECTION 1.** A new section to chapter 54-60 of the North Dakota Century Code is created
6 and enacted as follows:

7 **Office of entrepreneurship - Duties - Report.**

8 1. As used in this section:

9 a. "Business" means a corporation, partnership, company, cooperative, sole
10 proprietorship, or other legal entity organized or operating for pecuniary or
11 nonpecuniary gain.

12 b. "Entrepreneur" means an individual who initiates and assumes the financial risk
13 of a business.

14 c. "State agency" means an agency, board, commission, bureau, office,
15 department, institution, and any other state governmental entity. The term
16 excludes the legislative and judicial branches of state government.

17 2. There is created an office of entrepreneurship within the department of commerce.

18 Employees of the office of entrepreneurship report to the commissioner. The office of
19 entrepreneurship shall:

20 a. Work to strengthen policies and programs supporting the growth of
21 entrepreneurship in the state, including across demographic segments and
22 geographic areas.

23 b. Work with stakeholders and organizations supporting entrepreneurship to:

24 (1) Enhance the learning and skills of entrepreneurs;

- 1 (2) Provide technical support to entrepreneurs; and
2 (3) Expand access to resources for entrepreneurs.
3 c. Serve as a point of contact to assist businesses that have been in operation less
4 than five years, in their interactions with state agencies and, when appropriate,
5 refer the businesses to other state or local agencies that provide assistance to
6 businesses.
7 3. A state agency shall cooperate with and assist the office of entrepreneurship in the
8 performance of its duties and functions.
9 4. Before August of each even-numbered year, the office of entrepreneurship shall
10 provide a report to the legislative management which includes:
11 a. The number and total dollar amount of state contracts awarded to businesses
12 that have been in operation less than five years, including a breakdown by
13 demographic segments and geographical areas of the state;
14 b. The percentage of state contracts awarded to businesses that have been in
15 operation less than five years compared to the total number of contracts
16 awarded;
17 c. The percentage of the dollar amount of state contracts awarded to businesses
18 that have been in operation less than five years compared to the total dollar
19 amount of contracts awarded;
20 d. The types of businesses awarded a state contract;
21 e. Recommendations for improving access to state contracts for businesses that
22 have been in operation less than five years, including those businesses in
23 statistically underrepresented demographic segments and geographic areas of
24 the state;
25 f. Recommendations for improving entrepreneurship in the state, including
26 identifying regional challenges to entrepreneurship; and
27 g. Any additional information deemed necessary to provide an accurate depiction of
28 the condition of entrepreneurship in the state.
29 5. The office of entrepreneurship shall encourage five percent of the number of state
30 contracts to be awarded to businesses that have been in operation less than five years
31 and which have the principal place of the business located in the state.

1 6. All records, files, and communications of the office of entrepreneurship made or
2 received in accordance with this section are an exempt record under section
3 44-04-17.1.

4 **SECTION 2. APPROPRIATION - DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE - OFFICE OF**
5 **ENTREPRENEURSHIP - FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT POSITIONS.** There is appropriated out of
6 any moneys in the general fund in the state treasury, not otherwise appropriated, the sum of
7 \$485,000, or so much of the sum as may be necessary, to the department of commerce for the
8 purpose of providing salaries and benefits for office of entrepreneurship staff, for the biennium
9 beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2027. The department of commerce is authorized
10 two full-time equivalent positions to administer the office of entrepreneurship.