PRINTER'S NO. 504

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 510 Session of 2025

INTRODUCED BY KEARNEY, CAPPELLETTI, L. WILLIAMS, MUTH, SAVAL, STREET, HAYWOOD AND KANE, MARCH 27, 2025

REFERRED TO COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, MARCH 27, 2025

AN ACT

Amending Title 54 (Names) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, providing for Compassionate Name Change Assistance Grant Program and for powers and duties of the Department of Community and Economic Development; establishing the Compassionate Name Change Assistance Grant Fund; and making an appropriation.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. Title 54 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes is amended by adding a chapter to read:

CHAPTER 7A

COMPASSIONATE NAME CHANGE ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM

Sec.

7A01. Definitions.
7A02. Compassionate Name Change Assistance Grant Program.
7A03. Compassionate Name Change Assistance Grant Fund.
7A04. Administration.

§ 7A01. Definitions.

The following words and phrases when used in this chapter

shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Department." The Department of Community and Economic Development of the Commonwealth.

"Eligible applicant." A nonprofit organization or a county or municipal government.

"Eligible assistance program." A program providing support and guidance, which is informational, emotional, social, legal or otherwise in nature, to individuals who confront biases or inequalities based on gender or sexual stereotypes in navigating the name change process in this Commonwealth.

"Fund." The Compassionate Name Change Assistance Grant Fund established under section 7A03 (relating to Compassionate Name Change Assistance Grant Fund).

"Grant program." The Compassionate Name Change Assistance Grant Program established under section 7A02 (relating to Compassionate Name Change Assistance Grant Program).

"Nonprofit organization." A corporation or other entity based in this Commonwealth that is an exempt organization as defined under 26 U.S.C. § 501(c)(3) (relating to exemption from tax on corporations, certain trusts, etc.).

§ 7A02. Compassionate Name Change Assistance Grant Program.

(a) Establishment.--The Compassionate Name Change Assistance Grant Program is established as a competitive grant program within the department.

(b) Eligible uses of grant money.--Grants under the grant program may only be used for the costs of administering an eligible assistance program.

(c) Department powers and duties.--

(1) The department shall provide grants under the grant

program in accordance with this chapter to eligible applicants to administer eligible assistance programs.

(2) The department shall determine the form and manner by which an eligible applicant may apply for funding under section 7A04 (relating to administration). The application shall be posted on the department's publicly accessible Internet website.

(3) The department may establish guidelines for implementing the grant program under this section. The guidelines shall be posted on the department's publicly accessible Internet website.

§ 7A03. Compassionate Name Change Assistance Grant Fund.

(a) Establishment.--The Compassionate Name Change Assistance Grant Fund is established in the State Treasury.

(b) Appropriation.--All money deposited into the fund and the interest the money accrues shall be appropriated to the department on a continuing basis to award grants under this chapter.

(c) Transfers from General Fund.--In addition to any amounts otherwise authorized to be appropriated or made available to the fund for the grant program, the sum of $2,000,000 shall be transferred to the fund from the General Fund for the purposes of the grant program.

(d) Administrative costs.--No more than 1% of the money in the fund may be used for reasonable administrative costs.

§ 7A04. Administration.

(a) Applications.--An application for a grant under this chapter shall be submitted by an eligible applicant in the form and manner prescribed by the department.

(b) Application period.--Beginning no later than 180 days

after the effective date of this subsection, the department shall begin accepting and processing applications on a rolling basis until the grant program funding available for the fiscal year has been exhausted.

(c) Review process.--The department shall review applications and make awards subject to subsection (d) on a rolling basis. The department shall approve or deny an application no later than 30 days after the receipt of the application. An eligible applicant may revise and resubmit a denied application to the department.

(d) Allocation.--An eligible applicant may not receive more than the following amounts in any fiscal year:

(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3):

(i) The minimum grant amount awarded may not be less than $5,000.

(ii) The maximum grant amount awarded may not be more than $100,000.

(2) The department may award a grant of not more than $75,000 to eligible applicants that are headquartered within a city of the first class or second class.

(3) The department may award a grant of between $75,001 and $100,000 inclusive to eligible applicants that are:

(i) headquartered outside of a city of the first class or second class; or

(ii) implementing a new eligible assistance program for the first time in the same fiscal year for which the grant is awarded.

(e) Limitations.--

(1) The department may not provide grants in excess of the amount of money in the fund.

(2) The department may prorate the grant amount to an eligible applicant.

(3) The department may only award a grant to an eligible applicant that establishes to the department that the administration of its eligible assistance program involves at least one resident of this Commonwealth who identifies as transgender or nonbinary with specialized experience in assisting individuals who confront biases or inequalities based on gender or sexual stereotypes in navigating the name change process in this Commonwealth.

(f) Evaluation.--The department shall evaluate the utilization of grant program money, including an analysis of the total amount of grants awarded, each eligible applicant that received a grant and the efficacy of the eligible assistance programs funded through the grant program, based on disaggregated data. The department shall conduct the evaluation, at a minimum, every three years after the establishment of the grant program and shall post the evaluation on the department's publicly accessible Internet website.

Section 2. This act shall take effect immediately.