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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-FOURTH SESSION

H. F. No. 261

02/10/2025 Authored by Koznick and Dotseth The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Workforce, Labor, and Economic Development Finance and Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to economic development; appropriating money for a grant to provide
1.3 equine-experiential mental health therapy to first responders suffering from trauma
1.4 and post-traumatic stress disorder; requiring a report.

1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.6 Section 1. EQUINE-EXPERIENTIAL MENTAL HEALTH THERAPY FOR FIRST
1.7 RESPONDERS; APPROPRIATION; REPORTING.

1.8 (a) \$250,000 in fiscal year 2026 and \$250,000 in fiscal year 2027 are appropriated from
1.9 the general fund to the commissioner of employment and economic development for a grant
1.10 to Abijah's on the Backside to provide equine-experiential mental health therapy to first
1.11 responders suffering from job-related trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder. This is a
1.12 onetime appropriation.

1.13 (b) For purposes of this section, a "first responder" is an active or retired:

1.14 (1) peace officer as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 626.84, subdivision 1,
1.15 paragraph (c);

1.16 (2) full-time firefighter as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 299N.03, subdivision
1.17 5;

1.18 (3) volunteer firefighter as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 299N.03, subdivision
1.19 7;

1.20 (4) ambulance service personnel as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 144E.001,
1.21 subdivision 3a;

2.1 (5) 911 telecommunicator as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 403.02, subdivision
2.2 17c; or

2.3 (6) correctional officer as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 241.026, subdivision
2.4 1, paragraph (b).

2.5 (c) Abijah's on the Backside must report to the commissioner of employment and
2.6 economic development and the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative
2.7 committees with jurisdiction over employment and economic development policy and
2.8 finance on the equine-experiential mental health therapy provided to first responders under
2.9 this section. The report must include an overview of the program's budget, a detailed
2.10 explanation of program expenditures, the number of first responders served by the program,
2.11 and a list and explanation of the services provided to and benefits received by program
2.12 participants. An initial report is due by January 15, 2026, and a final report is due by January
2.13 15, 2028.