

HOUSE BILL 1095

C8

4lr1740

By: **Delegates Vogel and Foley**

Introduced and read first time: February 7, 2024

Assigned to: Appropriations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Economic Development – Local Journalism Sustainability Grant Program**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Local Journalism Sustainability Grant Program
4 within the Department of Commerce; requiring the Department to award grants
5 under the Program to certain small businesses for costs paid or incurred to place an
6 advertisement in a local newspaper, subject to certain limitations; requiring the
7 Governor to include in the annual State budget an appropriation of at least a certain
8 amount for the Program; and generally relating to the Local Journalism
9 Sustainability Grant Program.

10 BY adding to

11 Article – Economic Development

12 Section 5–2501 through 5–2504 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 25. Local
13 Journalism Sustainability Grant Program”

14 Annotated Code of Maryland

15 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

16 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
17 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

18 **Article – Economic Development**

19 **SUBTITLE 25. LOCAL JOURNALISM SUSTAINABILITY GRANT PROGRAM.**

20 **5–2501.**

21 **(A) IN THIS SUBTITLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS**
22 **INDICATED.**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (B) "PROGRAM" MEANS THE LOCAL JOURNALISM SUSTAINABILITY GRANT
2 PROGRAM ESTABLISHED UNDER § 5-2502 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

3 (C) "SMALL BUSINESS" MEANS A BUSINESS WITH FEWER THAN 50
4 EMPLOYEES.

5 5-2502.

6 (A) THERE IS A LOCAL JOURNALISM SUSTAINABILITY GRANT PROGRAM IN
7 THE DEPARTMENT.

8 (B) THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM IS TO:

9 (1) INCREASE ADVERTISING IN LOCAL NEWSPAPERS; AND

10 (2) SUPPORT LOCAL JOURNALISM.

11 5-2503.

12 (A) SUBJECT TO THE LIMITATIONS OF THIS SECTION, THE DEPARTMENT
13 SHALL AWARD A GRANT TO A SMALL BUSINESS EQUAL TO 100% OF THE COSTS PAID
14 OR INCURRED BY THE SMALL BUSINESS TO PLACE AN ADVERTISEMENT IN A LOCAL
15 NEWSPAPER.

16 (B) (1) BY SEPTEMBER 15 OF THE CALENDAR YEAR IN WHICH THE
17 ADVERTISING EXPENSES ARE PAID OR INCURRED, A SMALL BUSINESS MAY SUBMIT
18 AN APPLICATION TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR A GRANT AUTHORIZED UNDER THIS
19 SECTION.

20 (2) THE AMOUNT OF A GRANT AWARDED TO A SMALL BUSINESS
21 UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION MAY NOT EXCEED \$1,000.

22 (3) FOR ANY FISCAL YEAR, THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF GRANTS
23 APPROVED BY THE DEPARTMENT UNDER THIS SECTION MAY NOT EXCEED \$25,000.

24 (C) FOR EACH FISCAL YEAR, THE GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE IN THE
25 ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION OF AT LEAST \$25,000 TO THE
26 DEPARTMENT TO ADMINISTER GRANTS UNDER THE PROGRAM.

27 5-2504.

28 ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 31, 2026, AND EACH DECEMBER 31 THEREAFTER,
29 THE DEPARTMENT SHALL SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR AND, IN

1 ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, THE GENERAL
2 ASSEMBLY ON:

3 (1) THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF GRANTS AWARDED UNDER THE PROGRAM
4 DURING THE PREVIOUS FISCAL YEAR;

5 (2) THE SMALL BUSINESSES THAT RECEIVED A GRANT UNDER THE
6 PROGRAM; AND

7 (3) THE LOCAL NEWSPAPERS IN WHICH THE SMALL BUSINESSES
8 PLACED AN ADVERTISEMENT.

9 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June
10 1, 2024.