



## 104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

HB4973

by Rep. Dave Vella

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

20 ILCS 665/8a from Ch. 127, par. 200-28a  
30 ILCS 105/5.1038 new  
30 ILCS 105/6z-149 new

Amends the Illinois Promotion Act. Provides that the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity may issue competitive grants with initial terms of 10 years for the purpose of administering an incentive program that will attract or retain conventions, meetings, sporting events, and trade shows in Illinois with the goal of increasing business or leisure travel to and within the State. Amends the State Finance Act. Establishes the Tourism Incentive Grant Program Fund as a special fund in the State treasury. Provides that, on July 1, 2026, and every July 1 thereafter, or as soon thereafter as practical, the State Comptroller shall direct and the State Treasurer shall transfer the sum of \$5,000,000 from the General Revenue Fund to the Tourism Incentive Grant Program Fund. Effective immediately.

LRB104 17417 HLH 30842 b

1 AN ACT concerning State government.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The Illinois Promotion Act is amended by  
5 changing Section 8a as follows:

6 (20 ILCS 665/8a) (from Ch. 127, par. 200-28a)

7 Sec. 8a. Tourism grants and loans.

8 (1) The Department is authorized to make grants and loans,  
9 subject to appropriations by the General Assembly for this  
10 purpose from the Tourism Promotion Fund, to counties,  
11 municipalities, other units of local government, local  
12 promotion groups, not-for-profit organizations, or for-profit  
13 businesses for the development or improvement of tourism  
14 attractions in Illinois. Individual grants and loans shall not  
15 exceed \$1,000,000 and shall not exceed 50% of the entire  
16 amount of the actual expenditures for the development or  
17 improvement of a tourist attraction. Agreements for loans made  
18 by the Department pursuant to this subsection may contain  
19 provisions regarding term, interest rate, security as may be  
20 required by the Department and any other provisions the  
21 Department may require to protect the State's interest.

22 (2) From appropriations to the Department from the State  
23 CURE fund for this purpose, the Department shall establish

1 Tourism Attraction grants for purposes outlined in subsection  
2 (1). Grants under this subsection shall not exceed \$1,000,000  
3 but may exceed 50% of the entire amount of the actual  
4 expenditure for the development or improvement of a tourist  
5 attraction, including, but not limited to, festivals.  
6 Expenditures of such funds shall be in accordance with the  
7 permitted purposes under Section 9901 of the American Rescue  
8 Plan Act of 2021 and all related federal guidance.

9 (3) Subject to appropriation, the Department is authorized  
10 to issue competitive grants with initial terms of up to 5 years  
11 for the purpose of administering an incentive program that  
12 will attract or retain conventions, meetings, sporting events,  
13 and trade shows in Illinois with the goal of increasing  
14 business or leisure travel.

15 (4) Beginning July 1, 2026, subject to appropriation, the  
16 Department is authorized to issue competitive grants with  
17 initial terms of 10 years for the purpose of administering an  
18 incentive program that will attract or retain conventions,  
19 meetings, sporting events, and trade shows in Illinois with  
20 the goal of increasing business or leisure travel to and  
21 within the State. The Department shall provide for a new grant  
22 award of available funds under this item (4) once every 3  
23 years. An event shall not be considered ineligible for grant  
24 funding under this item (4) if multiple Illinois destinations  
25 are in competition for the same event. Room night credits that  
26 are actualized, contracted, revenue-generating group room

1 nights directly sourced by the grantee must exceed 200 for  
2 outside of the City of Chicago and 5,000 within the City of  
3 Chicago. The maximum amount awarded to entities outside the  
4 City of Chicago is \$1,000,000 in each grant award cycle. To be  
5 eligible for grant funding under this item (4), an applicant  
6 must be a certified convention and visitors bureau, a unit of  
7 local government, a local promotion group, a not-for-profit  
8 organization, a for-profit organization, or a convention  
9 center authority. If applicants are in a service area covered  
10 by a certified convention and visitors bureau, the application  
11 must include a letter of support from the certified convention  
12 and visitors bureau. Grant funding under this item (4) may be  
13 awarded to a joint effort between a certified convention and  
14 visitors bureau and another eligible entity. If the applicant  
15 intends to implement its program jointly with the certified  
16 convention and visitors bureau, the application should submit  
17 a letter of intent from the bureau providing details of the  
18 joint effort.

19 (Source: P.A. 102-16, eff. 6-17-21; 102-287, eff. 8-6-21;  
20 102-813, eff. 5-13-22; 103-8, eff. 6-7-23.)

21 Section 10. The State Finance Act is amended by adding  
22 Sections 5.1038 and 6z-149 as follows:

23 (30 ILCS 105/5.1038 new)

24 Sec. 5.1038. The Tourism Incentive Grant Program Fund.

1 (30 ILCS 105/6z-149 new)

2 Sec. 6z-149. Tourism Incentive Grant Program Fund;  
3 creation.

4 (a) The Tourism Incentive Grant Program Fund is created as  
5 a special fund in the State treasury. Money in the Tourism  
6 Incentive Grant Program Fund shall be used, subject to  
7 appropriation, for grants as provided in item (4) of Section  
8 8a of the Illinois Promotion Act.

9 (b) On July 1, 2026, and every July 1 thereafter, or as  
10 soon thereafter as practical, the State Comptroller shall  
11 direct and the State Treasurer shall transfer the sum of  
12 \$5,000,000 from the General Revenue Fund to the Tourism  
13 Incentive Grant Program Fund.

14 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon  
15 becoming law.