

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 Department of Commerce and Economic
5 Opportunity Law of the Civil Administrative Code of Illinois
6 is amended by adding Section 605-1055 as follows:

7 (20 ILCS 605/605-1055 new)

8 Sec. 605-1055. Illinois Innovation Voucher Program.

9 (a) The Department is authorized to establish the Illinois
10 Innovation Voucher Program to be administered in accordance
11 with this Section for the purpose of fostering research and
12 development in key industry clusters leading to the creation
13 of new products and services that can be marketed by Illinois
14 businesses. Subject to appropriation, the Department may award
15 innovation vouchers to eligible businesses to offset a portion
16 of expenses incurred through a collaborative research
17 engagement with an Illinois institution of higher education.

18 (b) Subject to appropriation, the Department may award
19 matching funds in the form of innovation vouchers up to 75% of
20 the cost of the research engagement not to exceed \$75,000. A
21 business may receive only one innovation voucher under this
22 Section per year.

23 (c) The Department, if administering the Program under

1 this Section:

2 (1) must encourage participation among small and
3 mid-sized businesses;

4 (2) must encourage participation in the Program in
5 diverse geographic and economic areas, including urban,
6 suburban, and rural areas of the State; and

7 (3) must encourage participation in the Program from
8 businesses that operate in key industries, as defined by
9 the Department. These industries include, but are not
10 limited to, the following: (i) agribusiness and agtech;
11 (ii) energy; (iii) information technology; (iv) life
12 sciences and healthcare; (v) manufacturing; and (vi)
13 transportation and logistics.

14 (d) In order to be eligible for an innovation voucher
15 under this Section, a business must satisfy all of the
16 following conditions:

17 (1) the business must be an Illinois-based business.
18 For the purposes of this Section, "Illinois-based
19 business" means a business that has its principal place of
20 business in this State or that employs at least 100
21 full-time employees, as defined under Section 5-5 of the
22 Economic Development for a Growing Economy Tax Credit Act,
23 in this State;

24 (2) the business must remain in this State for the
25 duration of research engagement; and

26 (3) the partnering institution of higher education

1 must be an Illinois-based institution of higher education
2 and non-profit. For the purposes of this Section,
3 "Illinois-based institution of higher education" means an
4 institution of higher education that has its main physical
5 campus in this State.

6 (e) The Illinois Innovation Voucher Program shall, when
7 not administered by the Department, be administered by an
8 Illinois non-profit organization or governmental entity with
9 expertise in innovation, technology, economic development,
10 research and development, and public private partnerships.
11 Subject to appropriation, the Department shall be authorized
12 to provide to the entity administering the Program an
13 administrative fee in an amount not to exceed 10% of the total
14 value of vouchers estimated by the Department to be issued in
15 each fiscal year.

16 (f) The Department may adopt any rules necessary to
17 administer the provisions of this Section.

18 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
19 becoming law.