Intended by Dorn, 30.

Read first time January 11, 2022

Committee: Appropriations

A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to appropriations; to appropriate federal funds to the Department of Environment and Energy.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,
Section 1. (1) There is hereby appropriated $10,000,000 from Federal Funds for FY2022-23 to the Department of Environment and Energy to award grants for electric infrastructure projects. The Federal Funds appropriated in this section are from the funds allocated to the State of Nebraska from the federal Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund pursuant to the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, Public Law 117-2, Subtitle M, Sec. 9901.

(2) The Legislature finds and declares that it is in the best interest of the State of Nebraska and its citizens to support and improve the reliability and resiliency of the electric grid in Nebraska, including advanced metering infrastructure technology.

(3)(a) For purposes of this subsection:

(i) Advanced metering infrastructure means an integrated metering infrastructure of smart meters, communication networks, and data management systems that enable two-way communication between distribution utilities and customers;

(ii) Department means the Department of Environment and Energy;

(iii) Electric grid means the facilities for transmission and distribution of electricity;

(iv) Electric infrastructure grant program means a program administered by the department to provide funding to eligible entities for eligible electric infrastructure projects;

(v) Eligible electric infrastructure project means a project in Nebraska by or on behalf of an eligible entity to support or improve the reliability and resiliency of electric transmission and distribution facilities owned, leased, or operated by an eligible entity;

(vi) Eligible entity means a public power district, a public power and irrigation district, a municipality, a registered or incorporated group of municipalities, an electric cooperative, an electric membership association, any other governmental entity, or any combination of such entities; and
(vii) Reliability and resiliency means the ability to withstand and reduce the magnitude and duration of events that disrupt electric power production and distribution, including the capability to anticipate, adapt to, prevent the effects of, and quickly recover from such an event.

(b)(i) Within ninety days after the effective date of this act the department shall establish an electric infrastructure grant program to award grants to eligible entities for eligible electric infrastructure projects. The department shall determine grant amounts based on the following criteria:

(A) Improvement to the reliability and resiliency of the electric grid owned or operated by an eligible entity;

(B) The cost-benefit analysis of an eligible electric infrastructure project;

(C) The benefit to be provided to the largest number of persons and communities;

(D) The use of innovative technologies to increase the reliability and resiliency of the electric grid and distribution systems;

(E) The location of the eligible electric infrastructure project; and

(F) The expected completion date of an eligible electric infrastructure project.

(ii) No eligible electric infrastructure project shall receive more than two million dollars in grants under an electric infrastructure grant program created pursuant to this section.

(iii) Each grant recipient shall report the completion of an eligible electric infrastructure project that received grant funding pursuant to this section to the department on a form prescribed by the department.

(iv) The department may adopt and promulgate rules and regulations to carry out the purposes of this section.