

House File 143 - Introduced

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BY WOOD

A BILL FOR

1 An Act providing for a rural veterinary practice innovation and
2 revitalization fund and program to assist veterinary practices
3 in certain counties, and making appropriations.
4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

unofficial

1 Section 1. Section 187.102, Code 2025, is amended by adding
2 the following new subsections:

3 NEW SUBSECTION. 01. "Agricultural animal" means an animal
4 belonging to the bovine, caprine, equine, ovine, or porcine
5 species; farm deer as defined in section 170.1; ostriches,
6 rheas, and emus; turkeys, chickens, domestic geese or ducks, or
7 other domestic fowl; fish or other aquatic organisms confined in
8 private waters for human consumption; or honey bees.

9 NEW SUBSECTION. 8A. "Licensed veterinarian" means an
10 individual who is validly and currently licensed to practice
11 veterinary medicine in the state under chapter 169.

12 NEW SUBSECTION. 13. "Veterinary practice" means a business
13 engaged in the practice of veterinary medicine as defined in
14 section 169.3, as any of the following:

15 a. An individual acting as a solo veterinary practitioner.

16 b. A partnership or a limited liability partnership formed
17 under chapter 486A in which all partnership interests are held by
18 licensed veterinarians.

19 c. A limited partnership formed under chapter 488 in which
20 all interests are held by licensed veterinarians.

21 d. A professional limited liability company formed under
22 chapter 489 in which all membership interests are held by
23 licensed veterinarians.

24 e. A professional corporation formed under chapter 496C in
25 which all shares are held by licensed veterinarians.

26 f. A corporation formed under chapter 504 in which all shares
27 are held by licensed veterinarians.

28 Sec. 2. Section 187.102, subsection 7, Code 2025, is amended
29 by striking the subsection.

30 Sec. 3. Section 187.201, subsection 3, Code 2025, is amended
31 to read as follows:

32 3. Moneys in the fund are appropriated to the department and
33 shall be used exclusively to administer the programs created
34 in this ~~subchapter~~ chapter as determined and directed by the
35 department, and shall not require further special authorization

1 by the general assembly.

2 Sec. 4. NEW SECTION. **187.211 Rural veterinary practice**
3 **innovation and revitalization fund.**

4 1. A rural veterinary practice innovation and revitalization
5 fund is established in the state treasury under the management
6 and control of the department.

7 2. The fund shall include moneys appropriated by the general
8 assembly and other moneys available to and obtained or accepted
9 by the department, including moneys from public or private
10 sources.

11 3. a. Moneys in the fund are appropriated to the department
12 for the purpose of supporting the rural veterinary practice
13 innovation and revitalization program established in section
14 187.316.

15 b. The department may use not more than five percent of
16 the balance of the unencumbered and unobligated moneys in the
17 fund at the beginning of a fiscal year to pay for the costs of
18 administering the program.

19 4. a. Notwithstanding section 12C.7, interest or earnings on
20 moneys in the fund shall be credited to the fund.

21 b. Notwithstanding section 8.33, moneys in the fund that
22 remain unencumbered or unobligated at the end of a fiscal year
23 shall not revert.

24 Sec. 5. NEW SECTION. **187.315 Administration.**

25 In administering the rural veterinary practice innovation and
26 revitalization program, the department shall consult with the
27 Iowa board of veterinary medicine as provided in section 169.5
28 and organizations interested in animal agriculture and the health
29 of agricultural animals.

30 Sec. 6. NEW SECTION. **187.316 Rural veterinary practice**
31 **innovation and revitalization program.**

32 1. The department shall establish and administer the rural
33 veterinary practice innovation and revitalization program for the
34 purpose of awarding financial assistance to eligible veterinary
35 practices to expand and improve veterinary services provided

1 to agricultural animals in those counties with a population of
2 thirty thousand or less according to the latest preceding federal
3 decennial census or the latest applicable population estimate
4 issued by the United States census bureau, whichever is most
5 recent.

6 2. The department shall award financial assistance to pay for
7 project costs incurred by doing one or more of the following:

8 a. Improve or expand existing facilities.

9 b. Acquire existing equipment, devices, tools, or
10 instruments.

11 c. Incorporate new methods and technologies, including
12 computerized systems.

13 3. The department shall establish eligibility criteria for
14 the program by rule. The eligibility criteria must include all
15 of the following:

16 a. The veterinary practice must be located in this state.

17 b. A licensed veterinarian associated with the veterinary
18 practice as a solo practitioner, partner, limited partner,
19 member, or shareholder must not have been subject to disciplinary
20 action in this state or another state within the last five years.

21 c. The veterinary practice must only employ individuals
22 legally authorized to work in this state.

23 d. The veterinary practice must not currently be in
24 bankruptcy.

25 e. The veterinary practice must employ less than fifty
26 individuals.

27 4. A veterinary practice seeking financial assistance under
28 this section must make application to the department in the
29 manner prescribed by the department by rule.

30 5. Applications shall be accepted during one or more annual
31 application periods to be determined by the department. Upon
32 reviewing and scoring all applications that are received during
33 an application period, and subject to funding, the department
34 may award financial assistance to eligible veterinary practices.
35 A financial assistance award shall not exceed the amount of

1 eligible project costs included in the eligible application.

2 Sec. 7. RURAL VETERINARY PRACTICE INNOVATION AND
3 REVITALIZATION FUND AND PROGRAM — APPROPRIATION.

4 1. There is appropriated from the general fund of the state
5 to the department of agriculture and land stewardship for the
6 fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026, the
7 following amount, or so much thereof as is necessary, to be used
8 for the purposes designated:

9 For deposit in the rural veterinary practice innovation and
10 revitalization fund established in section 187.211:
11 \$ 750,000

12 2. Of the moneys appropriated in this section, a veterinary
13 practice shall not receive more than \$25,000 in any fiscal year
14 under the rural veterinary practice innovation and revitalization
15 program established in section 187.316.

16 Sec. 8. CODE EDITOR DIRECTIVE.

17 1. The Code editor shall designate chapter 187, subchapter
18 II, sections 187.201 through 187.210 as part 1 and sections
19 187.211 through 187.300 as part 2.

20 2. The Code editor shall redesignate chapter 187, subchapter
21 III, part 3, as subchapter IV.

22 EXPLANATION

23 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
24 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

25 BACKGROUND — CHOOSE IOWA ACT. 2024 Iowa Acts, chapter 1177,
26 in part combined a number of existing programs promoting the
27 sale of Iowa farm commodities administered by the department of
28 agriculture and land stewardship (DALs) into new Code chapter
29 187, entitled the "Choose Iowa Act" (Code section 187.101).
30 The Code chapter is divided into three subchapters, including
31 subchapter I which provides for the chapter's general subject
32 matter such as a definitions section (Code section 187.102),
33 subchapter II which provides for financing various promotion
34 programs by establishing the choose Iowa fund (Code section
35 187.201), and subchapter III which is divided into three parts

1 for separate promotional programs to encourage the production and
2 consumption of Iowa commodities and products. Part 1 establishes
3 the choose Iowa promotional program providing for the advertising
4 of an agricultural commodity produced on an Iowa farm or an
5 agricultural product processed from a commodity produced on
6 an Iowa farm (Code sections 187.301 through 187.303), part 2
7 establishes the dairy innovation and revitalization program to
8 promote the development, modernization, and expansion of this
9 state's dairy industry by providing financing (Code section
10 187.311), and part 3 creates a value-added agricultural grant
11 program to identify, evaluate, and support projects and services
12 that add value to agricultural commodities produced on Iowa farms
13 (Code section 187.321).

14 BILL'S PROVISIONS. This bill establishes a rural veterinary
15 practice innovation and revitalization fund (fund) (Code
16 section 187.211) and rural veterinary practice innovation and
17 revitalization program (program) administered by DALS acting in
18 consultation with the Iowa board of veterinary medicine (board)
19 (Code sections 187.315 and 187.316). The purpose of the fund and
20 program is to award financial assistance to eligible veterinary
21 practices to expand and improve veterinary services provided to
22 agricultural animals in counties with a population of 30,000 or
23 less. Moneys awarded in financial assistance support the use
24 of facilities, the acquisition of existing equipment, devices,
25 tools, or instruments, and the incorporation of new methods and
26 technologies, including computerized systems. DALS is required
27 to adopt eligibility requirements. The veterinary practice must
28 be located in this state, must not have been subject to any
29 disciplinary action by the board, must only employ individuals
30 legally authorized to work in this state, must not currently be
31 in bankruptcy, and must employ less than 50 individuals.

32 APPROPRIATION. The bill appropriates \$750,000 to the fund in
33 support of the program. DALS cannot award financial assistance
34 of more than \$25,000 to any one eligible veterinary practice from
35 the fund in any fiscal year.