

**CHAPTER 1045****ENTREPRENEURS WITH DISABILITIES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM***H.F. 2435*

**AN ACT** relating to the entrepreneurs with disabilities program.

*Be It Enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Iowa:*

Section 1. Section 15.241, Code 1997, is amended to read as follows:

15.241 IOWA "SELF-EMPLOYMENT LOAN PROGRAM".

1. A "self-employment loan program account" is established within the strategic investment fund created in section 15.313 to provide funding for the self-employment loan program which is to be conducted in coordination with the job training partnership program and other programs administered under section 15.108, subsection 6, paragraph "c". The department may contract with local community action agencies or other local entities in administering the program, and shall work with the department of workforce development and the department of human services in developing the program. The department shall cooperate with the division of vocational rehabilitation under the department of education to implement a business development initiative for entrepreneurs with disabilities.

The self-employment loan program shall administer a low-interest loan program to provide loans to low-income persons and persons with disabilities for the purpose of establishing or expanding small business ventures. The terms of the loans shall be determined by the department, but shall not be in excess of ten thousand dollars to any single applicant or at a rate to exceed five percent simple interest per annum. The department shall maintain records of all loans approved and the effectiveness of those loans in establishing or expanding small business ventures.

The department may provide grants of not more than five thousand dollars under the program, if the grants are used to secure additional financing from private sources. The department may provide a service fee to financial institutions for administering loans provided under this section.

Payments of interest, recaptures of awards, and repayments of moneys loaned under this program shall be deposited into the strategic investment fund. Receipts from loans or grants under the business development initiative for entrepreneurs with disabilities program may be maintained in a separate account within the fund.

2. a. The department shall implement and administer an entrepreneurs with disabilities technical assistance program designed to provide only technical assistance to a qualified business under this subsection.

b. A business qualifies for assistance under this program if the business is fifty-one percent or more owned, operated, and actively managed by one or more persons with a disability and is located in this state, operated for profit, and has a gross income of less than three million dollars computed as an average of the three preceding years. "Disability" means disability as defined in section 15.102.

c. A person shall not be required to be a client of the division of vocational rehabilitation services or the department for the blind in order to qualify for assistance under this program.

d. The department shall adopt rules as necessary for the administration of the program.

Approved April 2, 1998