



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

One East Main, Suite 301 • Madison, WI 53703 • (608) 266-3847 • Fax: (608) 267-6873
Email: fiscal.bureau@legis.wisconsin.gov • Website: <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/lfb>

April 7, 2021

TO: Members
Joint Committee on Finance

FROM: Bob Lang, Director

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 275: Relating to Tourism Industry Grants and Use of Federal Funds

Senate Bill 275 (SB 275) was introduced April 5, 2021, and referred to the Joint Committee on Finance. (The companion bill to SB 275 is Assembly Bill 234.)

SUMMARY OF BILL

SB 275 would require the Governor to allocate \$75 million from the State Fiscal Recovery Fund (SFRF) under the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 for grants to tourism-related entities. The sections below describe two types of funding the bill would create.

Tourism Promotion and Development Organization Grants. The bill would require the Governor to allocate \$50,000,000 to the Department of Tourism for grants to tourism promotion and development organizations in the state. The bill would define these organizations as either: (a) nonprofit organizations with the primary purpose of promotion and development of tourism in Wisconsin or a particular region of Wisconsin; or (b) a department or unit of a municipal government or Native American tribe.

Marketing grants would be available to either type of entity to assist these organizations in short-term marketing in connection with the state's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, a nonprofit organization adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic would be eligible for grants to support continuation of operations. Organizations may receive grants up to 50% of the organization's average annual tourism marketing budget over the previous three years, not including 2020, or \$1,000,000, whichever is less. The maximum grant amount would apply to the total grants received for marketing or operations continuity.

Amusement Industry Grants. The bill would require the Governor to allocate \$25,000,000 to Tourism for grants to organizations that own or operate amusement or theme parks in Wisconsin. Funds would be required to support short-term marketing in connection with the organization's

recovery from the pandemic. The bill limits each grant to 50 percent of the organization's average annual tourism marketing budget over the previous three years, not including 2020.

FEDERAL STATE FISCAL RECOVERY FUND (SFRF)

The SFRF allows funds to be used for responses to the COVID-19 pandemic or its negative economic impacts, including aid to impacted industries such as tourism, travel, and hospitality.

Prepared by: Moriah Hayes