

HOUSE BILL NO. 385

INTRODUCED BY B. EBINGER

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A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT PROVIDING AN APPROPRIATION FOR PROGRAMMING THAT COMBINES STATE-APPROVED MEDIA ARTS EDUCATION WITH PROFESSIONAL TRAINING, FOSTERS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, AND ATTRACTS EMPLOYERS; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE."

WHEREAS, the rapid growth in population and new employers in Montana is increasing the opportunity and demand for a labor market with media arts skills; and

WHEREAS, professional media arts programs can educate, train, and prepare students, including adults, for quality jobs; and

WHEREAS, professional media arts programs with fee-based production activities can become self-sustaining and expand through their own revenue-making ability.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

NEW SECTION. **Section 1. Program criteria.** (1) The department of commerce shall identify professional media arts programs that are qualified to receive funding under the criteria provided in subsection (2).

(2) In order to receive funding from the department of commerce, a media arts program must:

(a) offer courses that are accredited in the state of Montana;

(b) have a record of operating media arts programs and the proven capacity to teach students and train workers in fiction, nonfiction, documentary, journalism, television news, or web-based programming, as well as produce these media products; and

(c) have a history of revenue-producing activity and a viable plan, as determined by the department of commerce, for becoming financially self-sustaining.

(3) The department of commerce shall administer the funding of the program through grants.

(4) The department of commerce shall offer guidance as necessary to ensure that media arts programs that receive this funding are meeting workforce needs.

