

**Bill No.:** HB1004 **Effective: Immediately**

**LSO No.:** 20LSO-0706

**Enrolled Act No.:** HEA No. 0001

**Chapter No.:** [Chapter Number\_RO]

**Prime Sponsor:** Joint Minerals, Business & Economic Development Interim Committee

**Catch Title:** COVID-19 business relief programs.

**Subject:** Business relief emergency expenses and programs.

**Summary/Major Elements:**

- This bill creates three programs designed to provide financial relief to Wyoming businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the state and local orders that closed businesses or resulted in business interruptions. In the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, states were allocated relief funds to cover costs that are necessary expenditures incurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Wyoming received \$1.25 billion in relief funds.
- This bill provides legislative findings, including finding that, because of the impacts Wyoming businesses have experienced because of the COVID-19 pandemic and to ensure an adequate supply of goods and services, the State has an obligation to use a portion of the relief funds to ensure that Wyoming businesses can remain open and contribute to Wyoming's economy.
- The Wyoming Business Council is required to administer the following three programs created in this bill:
  - First, the Wyoming Business Interruption Stipend Program reimburses eligible businesses for the costs of business interruptions caused by required closures (as provided in state and local health orders). This program is available for independently owned and operated Wyoming businesses with 50 or less full-time employees. The program provides each eligible business with a base \$20,000 stipend plus an additional amount based on the number of full-time or part-time employees or based on total employee hours worked in the last year, with stipends not exceeding \$50,000 for each business. Preference must be given to eligible businesses that did not receive federal Paycheck Protection Program funding. Fifty million dollars is appropriated for this program.
  - Second, the Coronavirus Business Relief Stipend Program provides stipends to eligible businesses adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and by required closures. The stipends are available for independently owned and operated Wyoming businesses with 100 or less full-time employees, although the Business Council can set aside the employee requirement for good cause shown. The program requires applicants to submit an expenditure plan with its application. Stipends are limited to \$300,000 per eligible business and can be spent only on specified expenditures related to the business interruption and recovery of the eligible business. Two hundred twenty-five million dollars is appropriated for this program, with fifty million dollars of that amount reserved for those businesses who were required to close as a result of a state or local public health order.

The above summary is not an official publication of the Wyoming Legislature and is not an official statement of legislative intent. While the Legislative Service Office endeavored to provide accurate information in this summary, it should not be relied upon as a comprehensive abstract of the bill.

- Third, the Coronavirus Mitigation Stipend Program reimburses eligible businesses for COVID-related expenses (including cleaning/sanitizing, protection and safety equipment, hiring additional employees, and providing training to protect the health and safety of the workers and to comply with public-health guidelines). Stipends are available for any business established on or before the enactment of state or local health orders and are for reimbursing COVID-related expenses incurred between March 1 and December 1, 2020. Stipends are limited to \$500,000 per eligible business. Fifty million dollars is appropriated for this program.
- For all three programs, only CARES Act funds may be used. The Attorney General must review the legality of the programs in writing. The Business Council may conduct random audits of stipend recipients to ensure compliance with this bill and federal law. The bill also authorizes the Governor to transfer a percentage of funds between, from, and to the three programs in this bill and between, to and from programs funded with CARES Act funds created in 2020 House Bill/Senate File 1001 or in 2020 House Bill/Senate File 1002, subject to limitations contained in 2020 House Bill/Senate File 1001.

NOTE: Final action on this bill was not taken at the time this summary was prepared. Should changes be made to the bill upon final passage, an updated summary will be prepared and placed upon the legislative website at <http://wyoleg.gov>. A packet of updated summaries will be sent to all legislators after the time for any veto has expired (fifteen days after adjournment).

The above summary is not an official publication of the Wyoming Legislature and is not an official statement of legislative intent. While the Legislative Service Office endeavored to provide accurate information in this summary, it should not be relied upon as a comprehensive abstract of the bill.