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August 29, 2022

The Honorable Karen Umberger, Chairman  
 Fiscal Committee of the General Court  
 State House  
 Concord, New Hampshire 03301

His Excellency, Governor Christopher T. Sununu  
 and the Honorable Council  
 State House  
 Concord, New Hampshire 03301

**REQUESTED ACTION**

Pursuant to RSA 14:30-a, VI, authorize the Department of the Business and Economic Affairs (BEA), Division of Economic Development, to accept and expend \$1,003,503 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF) to fund a Business Support Portal Feasibility and Design project, effective upon Fiscal Committee and Governor and Council approval through June 30, 2023. This is an allowable use of ARPA SFRF funds under Section 602 (c)(1)(A) to respond to the public health emergency or its negative economic impacts. **100% Federal Funds**

Funds are to be budgeted in FY2023 in the following new account:

03-022-022-220510 – Division of Economic Development,  
 26XX0000 – ARP Bus Supp Project as follows:<sup>1</sup>

03-022-022-220510-26XX0000		FY2023
CLASS	DESCRIPTION	BUDGET REQUEST
040 - 501587	Indirect Cost	\$2,500
041 - 500801	Audit Fund Set Aside	\$1,003
102 - 500731	Contracts for Program Services	\$1,000,000
	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$1,003,503</b>
SOURCE OF FUNDS		
000 - 400338	Federal Funds	\$1,003,503
	<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$1,003,503</b>

<sup>1</sup> All direct program costs will be accounted for using activity 00FRF602PH2206A and all administrative and indirect costs will be accounted for using activity 00FRF602PH2206Z. Accounting classifications may be subject to technical changes at the discretion of the Department of Administrative Services' Division of Accounting Services.

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### EXPLANATION

The economic impacts of COVID-19 have resulted in a significant increase in demand for digital platforms and options that ease the burden of improve the efficiency of accessing business and government services. Significantly reducing the burden for new and existing businesses to access state government services is also central to New Hampshire's Economic Recovery and Expansion Strategy (ERES) economic development and workforce development goals. Moreover, states New Hampshire competes with for recruitment and retention of businesses have advanced initiatives such as this, putting New Hampshire at a competitive disadvantage.

To address these issues, upon approval of this item, a qualified third party will work collaboratively with BEA and essential state agencies associated with business and employee support to develop a strategic road map to create a more responsive and cohesive online system dedicated to addressing the needs and expectations of businesses, employees, and small business owners in the state.

Considering the timeline for expenditure of ARPA SFRF funds, BEA targets the end of this year to complete the work on the Business Support Feasibility and Design project, to allow for sufficient time for future implementation of recommendations. The project will include:

- An assessment of all current available online state services and their delivery systems across multiple state agencies.
- A collection and analysis on user feedback of current systems.
- Conceptual development of a "front-door" services delivery portal, including identifying the possibility of integration of existing services, including but not limited to:
  - Workforce programming (e.g., training, employment services, unemployment registration, etc.)
  - Occupational licensing, registration, renewal
  - Business registration (e.g., creating new business, required reports, etc.)
  - Business support (e.g., financial assistance, business expansion, etc.)
  - State permitting
  - State filing services (e.g., tax filings, reports, etc.)
- An implementation plan for agencies and policymakers to use in developing this new tool.

In the event that Federal Funds become no longer available, General Funds will not be requested to support this project.

Respectfully submitted,



Taylor Caswell, Commissioner  
Department of Business and Economic Affairs