

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA  
ONE HUNDRED FOURTH LEGISLATURE  
FIRST SESSION

**LEGISLATIVE BILL 450**

Introduced by Mello, 5.

Read first time January 20, 2015

Committee:

1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to tourism; to amend sections 81-3701,  
2 81-3711, and 81-3714, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska; to  
3 change provisions relating to the Nebraska Tourism Commission; to  
4 authorize grants; to change provisions relating to use of funds; to  
5 create a fund; to state intent; to harmonize provisions; and to  
6 repeal the original sections.

7 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 Section 1. Section 81-3701, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is  
2 amended to read:

3 81-3701 Sections 81-3701 to 81-3724 and sections 4 and 5 of this act  
4 shall be known and may be cited as the Nebraska Visitors Development Act.

5 Sec. 2. Section 81-3711, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is  
6 amended to read:

7 81-3711 The commission shall:

8 (1) Administer the Nebraska Visitors Development Act;

9 (2) Prepare and approve a budget;

10 (3) Elect a chairperson and vice-chairperson;

11 (4) Procure and evaluate data and information necessary for the  
12 proper administration of the act;

13 (5) Appoint an executive director at a salary to be fixed by the  
14 commission to conduct the day-to-day operations of the commission;

15 (6) Employ personnel and contract for services which are necessary  
16 for the proper operation of the commission;

17 (7) Establish a means by which any interested person has the  
18 opportunity at least annually to offer his or her ideas and suggestions  
19 relative to the commission's duties for the upcoming year;

20 (8) Authorize the expenditure of funds and contracting of  
21 expenditures to carry out the act;

22 (9) Keep minutes of its meetings and other books and records which  
23 clearly reflect all of the actions and transactions of the commission and  
24 keep such records open to examination during normal business hours; and

25 (10) Prohibit any funds appropriated to the commission from being  
26 expended directly or indirectly to promote or oppose any candidate for  
27 public office or to influence state or federal legislation.

28 Sec. 3. Section 81-3714, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is  
29 amended to read:

30 81-3714 The State Visitors Promotion Cash Fund is created. The fund  
31 shall be administered by the commission. The fund shall consist of

1 revenue deposited into the fund pursuant to section 81-3715 and money  
2 donated as gifts, bequests, or other contributions from public or private  
3 entities. Funds made available by any department or agency of the United  
4 States may also be credited to the fund if so directed by such department  
5 or agency. The commission shall use the proceeds of the fund to generally  
6 promote, encourage, and attract visitors to and within the State of  
7 Nebraska, to and enhance the use of travel and tourism facilities within  
8 the state, and to provide marketing assistance grants to communities and  
9 organizations. The proceeds of the fund shall be in addition to funds  
10 appropriated to the commission from the General Fund. Any money in the  
11 State Visitors Promotion Cash Fund available for investment shall be  
12 invested by the state investment officer pursuant to the Nebraska Capital  
13 Expansion Act and the Nebraska State Funds Investment Act.

14       Sec. 4.   (1) The commission shall develop a program to provide  
15 marketing assistance grants to communities and organizations hosting  
16 national or international-caliber events held in Nebraska that have the  
17 potential to attract a significant percentage of out-of-state visitors  
18 and to generate favorable national or international press coverage for  
19 Nebraska.

20       (2) A community or organization applying for a grant shall provide a  
21 plan to the commission that includes: (a) Documentation that the event  
22 will attract out-of-state visitors; (b) details regarding the type of  
23 marketing that would be carried out with state funds; (c) methodologies  
24 used to track the impact of marketing efforts and the number of out-of-  
25 state visitors attending the event; and (d) details regarding the  
26 potential national or international press coverage that will be generated  
27 by the event.

28       (3) The executive director shall convene a technical review  
29 committee of no fewer the three individuals representing the public  
30 sector, the private sector, and citizens at large. The technical review  
31 committee and the executive director shall review and score applications

1 and forward recommendations to the commission for approval by the  
2 commission or a subcommittee of the commission.

3 (4) Communities and organizations receiving grants authorized under  
4 this section shall provide a final report to the commission within ninety  
5 days after the completion date of the event that includes event  
6 attendance, the use of funds, and marketing impact information.

7 Sec. 5. The Tourism Conference Cash Fund is created. The fund shall  
8 be administered by the commission. All sums of money received from fees  
9 from any conference or event held by the commission shall be deposited in  
10 the fund. The commission shall use the fund to defray expenses related to  
11 any conference or event sponsored by the commission. Any money in the  
12 fund available for investment shall be invested by the state investment  
13 officer pursuant to the Nebraska Capital Expansion Act and the Nebraska  
14 State Funds Investment Act.

15 Sec. 6. It is the intent of the Legislature that any state agency  
16 operating a grant program intended to encourage tourism and to provide  
17 support for tourist attractions in Nebraska shall consult with the  
18 Nebraska Tourism Commission in its grant review process.

19 Sec. 7. Original sections 81-3701, 81-3711, and 81-3714, Reissue  
20 Revised Statutes of Nebraska, are repealed.