AN ACT

To amend chapter 251, RSMo, by adding thereto one new section relating to empowerment microgrants.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Chapter 251, RSMo, is amended by adding thereto one new section, to be known as section 251.450, to read as follows:

251.450. 1. As used in this section, the following terms shall mean:

(1) "Board", the empowerment microgrants board created in subsection 3 of this section;

(2) "Poverty area", a census tract with at least twenty percent of the population living at or below the poverty level as of the last decennial census.

2. There is hereby created the "Empowerment Microgrants" program which shall provide grants to persons living in impoverished areas and who engage in entrepreneurial activity or undergo continuing adult education.

3. The program shall be administered by a board comprised of an individual appointed from each congressional district by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate.

4. To be eligible for grants under this section, a person shall meet the following qualifications:

(1) Currently reside in a poverty area;

(2) Have resided in a poverty area for the past twelve months;

(3) Have an income no greater than two hundred percent of the federal poverty level at the time of application;

(4) Not be related to any person on the board or employee of the...
board within the first or second degree of consanguinity;

(5) Sign a grant award contract which shall include claw-back provisions; and

(6) Engage in either entrepreneurial activity or continuing adult education.

5. For persons seeking a grant for entrepreneurial activity, such person shall submit to the board a business plan and any other documents the board may require. Continuing adult education shall include but not be limited to classes on financial literacy, adult literacy, family literacy, and career transition and retraining.

6. No individual shall qualify for a grant of more than twenty-five thousand dollars. Grant award contracts shall include provisions requiring repayment of the grant should the recipient fail to use the grant funds in the manner required by the grant contract. Amounts required to be repaid shall not bear interest.

7. The board shall not spend more than five percent of its funds on overhead and administration of grants.

8. There is hereby created in the state treasury the "Empowerment Microgrants Fund", which shall consist of money appropriated to such fund and any private donations. The state treasurer shall be custodian of the fund and may approve disbursements from the fund in accordance with sections 30.170 and 30.180. Upon appropriation, money in the fund shall be used solely for the administration of this section. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 33.080 to the contrary, any moneys remaining in the fund at the end of the biennium shall not revert to the credit of the general revenue fund. The state treasurer shall invest moneys in the fund in the same manner as other funds are invested. Any interest and moneys earned on such investments shall be credited to the fund.

9. Pursuant to section 23.253 of the Missouri sunset act:

(1) The provisions of the new program authorized under this section shall sunset automatically six years after the effective date of this section unless reauthorized by an act of the general assembly; and

(2) If such program is reauthorized, the program authorized under this section shall sunset automatically six years after the effective date of the reauthorization of this section; and

(3) This section shall terminate on September first of the
calendar year immediately following the calendar year in which the program authorized under this section is sunset.