

**ASSEMBLY, No. 5504**

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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

**219th LEGISLATURE**

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INTRODUCED MARCH 17, 2021

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblywoman ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT**

**District 31 (Hudson)**

**Assemblyman ANTHONY S. VERRELLI**

**District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)**

**SYNOPSIS**

Establishes “Municipal Community Center Grant Program.”

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/17/2021)**

1 AN ACT establishing the “Municipal Community Center Grant  
2 Program,” and supplementing Title 52 of the Revised Statutes.

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4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*  
5 *of New Jersey:*

6  
7 1. a. There is established the “Municipal Community Center  
8 Grant Program” in the Division of Housing and Community  
9 Resources in the Department of Community Affairs, which shall  
10 provide grants to municipalities, as annually appropriated, for the  
11 construction of new community centers.

12 b. The director shall administer the program, and shall:

13 (1) prescribe procedures for grant applications;

14 (2) advise and assist municipalities in the preparation of grant  
15 applications;

16 (3) establish criteria and procedures for the award of grants  
17 consistent with the provisions of this section; and

18 (4) monitor and evaluate the use of grant funds received by  
19 municipalities pursuant to this section.

20 c. Any municipality may apply to the director to receive a  
21 grant under the program to construct a new community center  
22 within the municipality. The director shall first evaluate all  
23 applications to determine which municipalities establish the greatest  
24 need for a community center due to a current lack of such facilities,  
25 or insufficient number of such facilities relative to the population of  
26 the municipality, and shall prioritize the award of grants to these  
27 applicant municipalities. The funds distributed under the program  
28 shall be utilized solely toward the construction of new community  
29 centers.

30 d. The Department of Community Affairs shall request  
31 annually as part of its annual budget proposal a minimum of  
32 \$10,000,000 to fund the grants authorized pursuant to this section.  
33 The department and the Division of Housing and Community  
34 Resources also shall pursue and utilize any available federal, State,  
35 local, and private funding for the grants authorized pursuant to this  
36 section.

37 e. Of the amount appropriated to the program, two percent  
38 shall be allocated to the Division of Housing and Community  
39 Resources to be used to administer the program.

40 f. As used in this section:

41 “Community center” means any indoor or outdoor buildings,  
42 spaces, structures, or improvements intended for active or passive  
43 recreation, including but not limited to recreation fields and  
44 facilities, meeting halls, and classrooms, accommodating either  
45 organized or informal activity.

1       “Director” means the director of the Division of Housing and  
2 Community Resources in the Department of Community Affairs.

3       “Program” means the “Municipal Community Center Grant  
4 Program” established pursuant to subsection a. of this section.

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6       2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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11       This bill would establish the “Municipal Community Center  
12 Grant Program” in the Division of Housing and Community  
13 Resources in the Department of Community Affairs. This program  
14 would annually provide grants to municipalities for use towards the  
15 construction of new community centers. These centers enable  
16 communities to grow and play an important role in the health and  
17 well-being of its constituents.

18       The bill provides a priority in the award of grants to  
19 municipalities that currently lack community centers or have an  
20 insufficient number of such facilities relative to the population of  
21 the municipality.

22       The bill requires the Department of Community Affairs to  
23 annually request, as part of its annual budget proposal, a minimum  
24 of \$10,000,000 to fund the grants authorized by the bill. The bill  
25 also requires the department and the Division of Housing and  
26 Community Resources to pursue and utilize any available federal,  
27 State, local, and private funding for the grants.