News Release

Gov. Ricketts Announces New Grant Programs To Get Nebraska Growing, Proclaims October As Pregnancy And Infant Awareness Month In Nebraska

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Governor's Media Release:

LINCOLN – Today, Governor Pete Ricketts announced new grant programs to continue growing Nebraska in the midst of the disruptions of the coronavirus pandemic. As part of the Coronavirus Relief Fund, the State of Nebraska received $1.084 billion in federal assistance to address coronavirus-related needs across the state. These funds are being used to assist in the State's direct response to the coronavirus pandemic, as well as providing assistance to Nebraska businesses, non-profits, and public healthcare providers who have been adversely impacted due to the pandemic.

The Governor gave a status update on the funds utilized so far by the State's existing grant programs. He then announced that the State will award a

second round of grants within the following programs:

- Community CARES Grant Program
  - $48.5 million of additional funds will be awarded to assist non-profits and care providers as they respond to needs arising from the coronavirus pandemic.
- Business and Livestock Producer Stabilization Grant Program
  - On a first come, first served basis, $25 million will go to fund a new round of grants to eligible businesses and ag producers who have not yet received assistance.

DHHS CEO Dannette R. Smith joined the Governor to overview the various grants within the Community CARES program. These grants are available to charities, DHHS-licensed care organizations, places of worship, child care centers, food banks, shelters, and other non-profits.

Additionally, the Governor announced targeted grant programs to support businesses in industries particularly hard-hit due to the pandemic. These include direct-payment grants for the following categories of business:

- Restaurants and Bars - $20 million
- Cosmetic, Massage, and Body Art Services - $22 million
- Event Centers and Sports Arenas - $20 million
- Hotels and Convention Centers - $34 million
- Ethanol Producers - $15 million
- Zoos - $6.05 million
- Movie Theaters - $3.2 million

Grant applications open October 21, 2020 and will close November 13, 2020. To apply, visit coronavirus.nebraska.gov/Programs&Grants as of October 21st. The grants will be issued by December 30, 2020.

Additionally, the State is allocating up to $40 million to support hospital capacity across Nebraska. These funds will be provided to General Acute Care Hospitals as they demonstrate the need and ability to increase capacity to care for COVID-19 patients.

The State is also earmarking an additional $100 million to reimburse State agencies for eligible coronavirus expenses. Expanded financial support will also be available to local governments to cover payroll costs from March 1st through May 31st for workers on the frontline of coronavirus response such as dispatchers, corrections teammates, and public health staff.

This morning, the Governor also proclaimed October as Infant and Pregnancy Loss Awareness Month in Nebraska. Jolie Vega, founder and president of No Footprint Too Small (NFTS), and Chloe Zabel—who volunteers with NFTS—described their journeys of pregnancy and infant loss. NFTS is a Nebraska-based nonprofit serving women and families experiencing pregnancy or infant loss. The organization's website is nofootprinttoosmall.com.

Additionally, DHHS Director of Behavioral Health Sheri Dawson advised Nebraskans to be aware of the increased stress many Nebraskans are dealing with during the pandemic. She offered tips for reducing stress and urged Nebraskans to conduct themselves with civility in their interpersonal communications. She also reviewed the signs of mental health distress and encouraged Nebraskans to seek support if they identify these symptoms in themselves or loved ones. For a list of the common signs of mental health distress, click here.

A PDF with more information on the grant programs is available by clicking here.

Video from today's press conference is available by clicking here.

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