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State of Minnesota
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTY-FIFTH
SESSION

HOUSE FILE No. **3735**

March 3, 2008

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The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Health and Human Services

March 5, 2008

By motion, recalled and re-referred to the Committee on Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology and Elections

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to state government; changing provisions of the Commission of Deaf,
1.3 Deaf-blind and Hard-of-Hearing Minnesotans; amending Minnesota Statutes
1.4 2006, section 256C.28, as amended.

1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.6 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2006, section 256C.28, as amended by Laws 2007,
1.7 chapter 133, article 2, section 11, is amended to read:

1.8 **256C.28 COMMISSION ~~SERVING OF~~ DEAF, DEAF-BLIND, AND**
1.9 **HARD-OF-HEARING ~~PEOPLE~~ MINNESOTANS.**

1.10 Subdivision 1. **Membership.** The ~~Minnesota~~ Commission ~~Serving of~~ Deaf,
1.11 Deaf-blind and Hard-of-Hearing ~~People~~ Minnesotans consists of seven members
1.12 appointed at large and one member from each advisory committee established under
1.13 section 256C.24, subdivision 3. At least 50 percent of the members must be deaf or
1.14 deaf-blind or hard of hearing. Members shall include persons who are deaf, deaf-blind,
1.15 and hard of hearing, parents of children who are deaf, deaf-blind, and hard of hearing, and
1.16 representatives of county and regional human services, including representatives of private
1.17 service providers. Commission members are appointed by the governor for a three-year
1.18 term and shall serve no more than two consecutive terms. The commission shall select
1.19 one member as chair. Notwithstanding section 15.059, the commission does not expire.

1.20 Subd. 2. **Removal; vacancies.** The compensation, removal of members, and filling
1.21 of vacancies on the commission are as provided in section 15.0575.

1.22 Subd. 3. **Mission.** The commission shall serve as the principal agency of the state
1.23 to advocate on behalf of Minnesotans who are deaf, deaf-blind, and hard-of-hearing

2.1 ~~Minnesotans~~ by working to ensure those persons have equal access to the services,
2.2 programs, and opportunities available to others.

2.3 Subd. 3a. **Duties.** The commission shall:

2.4 (1) assist persons who are deaf, deaf-blind, and hard-of-hearing persons and parents
2.5 of students who are deaf, deaf-blind, and hard-of-hearing students in advocating for equal
2.6 access to services, programs, and opportunities;

2.7 (2) advise the governor, the legislature, the judicial branch, and the commissioners
2.8 of ~~the Departments of Human Services, Education, Employment and Economic~~
2.9 ~~Development, and Health~~ all state agencies on the development of policies, programs, and
2.10 services affecting persons who are deaf, deaf-blind, and hard-of-hearing persons, and on
2.11 the use of appropriate federal and state money;

2.12 (3) create a public awareness of the special needs and potential of persons who are
2.13 deaf, deaf-blind, and hard-of-hearing persons;

2.14 (4) provide the governor, the legislature, and the commissioners of ~~the Departments~~
2.15 ~~of Human Services, Education, Employment and Economic Development, and Health~~ all
2.16 state agencies with a review of ongoing services, programs, and proposed legislation
2.17 affecting persons who are deaf, deaf-blind, and hard-of-hearing persons;

2.18 (5) advise the governor, the legislature, the judicial branch, and the commissioners
2.19 of ~~the Departments of Human Services, Education, Employment and Economic~~
2.20 ~~Development, and Health~~ all state agencies on statutes, rules, and policies necessary to
2.21 ensure that persons who are deaf, deaf-blind, and hard-of-hearing persons have equal
2.22 access to benefits and services provided to individuals in Minnesota;

2.23 (6) recommend to the governor, the legislature, the judicial branch, and the
2.24 commissioners of ~~the Departments of Human Services, Education, Employment and~~
2.25 ~~Economic Development, and Health~~ all state agencies legislation designed to improve the
2.26 economic and social conditions of persons who are deaf, deaf-blind, and hard-of-hearing
2.27 persons in Minnesota;

2.28 (7) propose solutions to problems of persons who are deaf, deaf-blind, and
2.29 hard-of-hearing persons in the areas of education, employment, human rights, human
2.30 services, health, housing, and other related programs;

2.31 (8) recommend to the governor ~~and~~, the legislature, and the commissioners of all
2.32 state agencies any needed revisions in the state's affirmative action program and any other
2.33 steps necessary to eliminate the underemployment or unemployment of deaf, deaf-blind,
2.34 and hard-of-hearing persons in the state's work force;

3.1 (9) work with other state and federal agencies and organizations to promote
3.2 economic development for Minnesotans who are deaf, deaf-blind, and hard-of-hearing
3.3 ~~Minnesotans~~; and

3.4 (10) coordinate its efforts with other state and local agencies serving persons who
3.5 are deaf, deaf-blind, and hard-of-hearing~~persons~~.

3.6 Subd. 4. **Staff.** The commission may appoint, subject to the approval of the
3.7 governor, an executive director who must be experienced in administrative activities
3.8 and familiar with the problems and needs of persons who are deaf, deaf-blind, and
3.9 hard-of-hearing~~persons~~. The commission may delegate to the executive director any
3.10 powers and duties under this section that do not require commission approval. The
3.11 executive director serves in the unclassified service and may be removed at any time by a
3.12 majority vote of the commission. The executive director shall coordinate the provision of
3.13 necessary support services to the commission with the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Services
3.14 Division. The executive director may employ and direct staff necessary to carry out
3.15 commission mandates, policies, activities, and objectives.

3.16 Subd. 5. **Powers.** The commission may contract in its own name. Contracts must
3.17 be approved by a majority of the members of the commission and executed by the chair
3.18 and the executive director. The commission may apply for, receive, and expend in its
3.19 own name grants and gifts of money consistent with the powers and duties specified
3.20 in this section.

3.21 Subd. 6. **Report.** The commission may prepare and distribute periodic reports to the
3.22 state agency commissioners, the governor, and the legislature concerning the activities
3.23 of the commission and the needs and concerns of Minnesotans who are deaf, deaf-blind,
3.24 and hard-of-hearing~~Minnesotans~~.

3.25 Sec. 2. **REVISOR'S INSTRUCTION.**

3.26 The revisor of statutes shall change "commission serving deaf and hard-of-hearing
3.27 people" or "Minnesota commission serving deaf and hard-of-hearing people" to
3.28 "Commission of Deaf, Deaf-blind, and Hard-of-Hearing Minnesotans" wherever it
3.29 appears in Minnesota Statutes.