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S.F. No. 4403 – State Board of Civil Legal Aid (as amended by the SCS4403A-3)

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Summary

S.F. 4403 establishes the State Board of Civil Legal Aid as part of the the Judicial Branch and appropriates money to the board. The board replaces the Minnesota Supreme Court’s Legal Services Advisory Committee.

Sections 1-2 make conforming changes.

Section 3 establishes the State Board of Civil Legal Aid.

Subd. 1. Structure; membership. The board is part of, but not under the administrative control of, the judicial branch. The board consists of 11 members: six members appointed by the supreme court and five members appointed by the governor.

Subd. 2. Duties and responsibilities. The board must work to ensure access to high quality civil legal services, approve and recommend to the legislature a budget, establish procedures for distribution of funding to civil legal services programs, and establish civil legal program standards.

Subd. 3. State civil legal aid program administrator. The board must adopt a program administrator who serves at the pleasure of the board and must attend board meetings but may not vote.

Subd. 4. Administration. The board may contract for administrative support services.

Subd. 5. Access to records. The board is subject to the Judicial Branch Rules of Public Access for Records, excluding the appeals process in Rule 9.

Sections 4-6 make conforming changes.

Section 7 appropriates \$33,560,000 in fiscal year 2025 to the board, with \$1,017,000 of that amount to be used to improve low-income clients' access to legal representation in family law matters.

Section 8 makes a conforming change.

Section 9 provides an effective date of July 1, 2025.