ENGROSSED HOUSE
BILL NO. 2246

By: Sears and Casey of the House

and

Jolley, Treat and Pittman of the Senate

An Act relating to state government; amending 74 O.S. 2011, Section 500.2, as last amended by Section 1, Chapter 109, O.S.L. 2014 (74 O.S. Supp. 2014, Section 500.2), which relates to the State Travel Reimbursement Act; authorizing the Office of Educational Quality and Accountability to enter into contracts for payment of certain expenses relating to conferences, meetings and training sessions; allowing the Office of Educational Quality and Accountability to establish necessary accounts; providing for direct payment of expenses; and limiting the cost of food under certain conditions.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 74 O.S. 2011, Section 500.2, as last amended by Section 1, Chapter 109, O.S.L. 2014 (74 O.S. Supp. 2014, Section 500.2), is amended to read as follows:

Section 500.2 A. Officials and employees of the state, traveling on authorized state business, may be reimbursed for expenses incurred in such travel in accordance with the provisions of the State Travel Reimbursement Act and existing statutes relating

to state travel. Persons who are not state employees, but who are performing substantial and necessary services to the state which have been directed or approved by the appropriate department official shall enjoy the protection of the sovereign immunity of the state to the same extent as a paid employee. Such persons may be reimbursed for expenses incurred during authorized official travel under these same statutory provisions, provided it is indicated on the claim the person is not a state employee, a description of services performed is entered, and the agency head by approval of the claim certifies such services were substantial and necessary, and germane to the duties and functions of the reimbursing agency. Travel expenses incurred by a person during the course of seeking employment with a state agency, unless such travel is performed at the request of the employing agency, shall not be considered expenses incurred in performing substantial and necessary services to the state and shall not be reimbursed under the provisions of the State Travel Reimbursement Act.

B. The chief administrative officer of the Department of Public Safety, the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation, the Oklahoma State Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs Control, the Military Department of the State of Oklahoma, the Department of Corrections, the Office of Management and Enterprise Services, the Alcoholic Beverage Laws Enforcement Commission, the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry, the Oklahoma Department of

Emergency Management, the State Fire Marshal, and the State Department of Health may arrange for and charge meals and lodging for a contingent of state personnel moved into an area for the purpose of preserving the public health, safety, or welfare or for the protection of life or property. The cost for meals or lodging so charged shall not exceed the amount authorized in the State Travel Reimbursement Act. The chief administrative officer of each agency involved in such an operation shall require the vendor furnishing meals, lodging, or both meals and lodging to submit an itemized statement for payment. When a claim for lodging is made for a contingent of state personnel, individual members of the contingent may not submit a claim for lodging. When a claim for meals is made for a contingent of state personnel, individual members of the contingent may not submit a claim for meals.

C. The Oklahoma Department of Commerce, the Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology, and the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry are hereby authorized to enter into contracts and agreements for the payment of food, lodging, meeting facility and beverage expenses as may be necessary for sponsoring seminars and receptions relating to economic development and science and technology issues. Such expenses may be paid directly to the contracting agency or business establishment. The Director of the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, the President of the Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and

Technology, and the Commissioner of Agriculture shall each provide a quarterly report of such expenditures to the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

D. The Native American Cultural and Educational Authority is hereby authorized to enter into contracts and agreements for the payment of food, lodging, and meeting facility as may be necessary to pursue the promotion of ~~fund-raising~~ fundraising, marketing, and development of Native American educational programs and cultural projects, or to sponsor luncheons, seminars, and receptions relating to Native American educational, cultural, museum, and economic development issues. Such expenses may be paid directly to the contracting agency or business establishment. The Executive Director shall provide a monthly report of expenditures to the Board.

E. For purposes of this section:

1. "State agency" means any constitutionally or statutorily created state board, commission, or department, including the Legislature and the Courts;

2. State agencies are authorized to enter into contracts and agreements for the payment of food and lodging expenses as may be necessary for employees or other persons who are performing substantial and necessary services to the state by attending official conferences, meetings, seminars, workshops, or training

sessions or in the performance of their duties. Such expenses may be paid directly to the contracting agency or business establishment, provided the meeting qualifies for overnight travel for the employees and the cost for food and lodging for each employee shall not exceed the total daily rate as provided in the State Travel Reimbursement Act;

3. State agencies are authorized to enter into contracts and agreements for the payment of conference registration expenses as may be necessary for employees or other persons who are performing substantial and necessary services to the state by attending official conferences, meetings, seminars, workshops, or training sessions. Such expenses may be paid directly to the contracting agency or business establishment; and

4. State agencies are authorized to enter into contracts and agreements for the payment of food and lodging expenses as may be necessary for employees attending an official course of instruction or training conducted or sponsored by any state agency. Expenses may be paid directly to the contracting agency or business establishment. The cost for food and lodging for each employee shall not exceed the total daily rate as provided in the State Travel Reimbursement Act.

F. State agencies are authorized to make direct purchases of commercial airline tickets for use by employees in approved out-of-state travel. Each claim or invoice submitted to the Director of

the Office of Management and Enterprise Services for the payment of the purchase shall bear the airline identifying ticket number, the name of the airline, total cost of each ticket purchased, class of accommodation and name of the employee for whom the ticket was purchased, and shall be filed on claim forms as prescribed by the Director of the Office of Management and Enterprise Services. The employee shall sign an affidavit stating that the employee used a direct purchase commercial airline ticket received for his or her approved out-of-state travel, or in lieu of the affidavit, the employee may file a travel claim in connection with said airline flight.

G. 1. The Director of the Office of Management and Enterprise Services is hereby authorized to enter into contracts and agreements for the payment of food, lodging, and other authorized expenses as may be necessary to host, conduct, sponsor, or participate in conferences, meetings, or training sessions. The Director may establish accounts as necessary for the collection and distribution of funds, including funds of sponsors and registration fees, related to such conferences, meetings, and training sessions. Expenses incurred may be paid directly to the contracting agency or business establishment.

2. The cost of food for persons attending any conferences, meetings, and training sessions that do not require overnight travel

shall not exceed the total daily rate as provided in the State Travel Reimbursement Act.

H. 1. The Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services is hereby authorized to enter into contracts and agreements for the payment of food, lodging, and other authorized expenses as may be necessary to host, conduct, sponsor, or participate in conferences, meetings, or training sessions. The Commissioner may establish accounts as necessary for the collection and distribution of funds, including funds of sponsors and registration fees, related to such conferences, meetings, and training sessions. Any expenses incurred may be paid directly to the contracting agency or business establishment.

2. The cost of food for persons attending any conferences, meetings, and training sessions that do not require overnight travel shall not exceed the total daily rate as provided in the State Travel Reimbursement Act.

I. The Oklahoma Indigent Defense System is hereby authorized to enter into contracts and agreements for the payment of lodging as necessary for employees to carry out their duties in representing any client whom the System has been properly appointed to represent. Such expenses may be paid directly to the contracting agency or business establishment. The cost for lodging for each employee shall not exceed the daily rate as provided in the State Travel Reimbursement Act.

J. The Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department is hereby authorized to enter into contracts and agreements for the payment of food, lodging, and meeting facility and beverage expenses as may be necessary for seminars and receptions relating to familiarization tours and tourism development. The expenses may be paid directly to the contracting agency or business establishment. The Executive Director of the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department shall provide a monthly report of any such expenditures to the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Commission.

K. The Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department is hereby authorized to enter into contracts and agreements for the payment of exhibitor fees and display space charges at expositions to promote the Department's recreational facilities and the tourism and recreation industry. The expenses may be paid directly to the contracting agency or business establishment; provided that no payment shall be made prior to the event unless it conveys a property right to the state for future availability and use.

L. 1. The Oklahoma Highway Safety Office of the Department of Public Safety is hereby authorized to enter into contracts and agreements for the payment of food, lodging, and other authorized expenses as may be necessary, to host, conduct, sponsor, or participate in highway-safety-related conferences, workshops, seminars, meetings, or training sessions. The payments shall be for all persons in attendance, including, but not limited to, employees

of political subdivisions or employees of the state or federal government. For purposes specified in this paragraph, only federal highway safety funds may be used in accordance with federal guidelines and regulations, and no appropriated state funds shall be used.

2. The cost of food for persons attending any highway safety conferences, workshops, seminars, meetings, and training sessions that do not require overnight travel shall not exceed the total daily rate as provided in the State Travel Reimbursement Act.

M. 1. The Director of the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation is hereby authorized to enter into contracts and agreements for the payment of food, lodging and other authorized expenses as may be necessary to host, conduct, sponsor or participate in any conference, meeting, training session or initiative to promote the mission and purposes of the Bureau. The payments may be for all persons in attendance, including, but not limited to, employees of political subdivisions or employees of the state or federal government.

2. The cost of food for persons that do not require overnight travel shall not exceed the total daily rate as provided in the State Travel Reimbursement Act.

N. The Oklahoma Homeland Security Director is hereby authorized to enter into contracts and agreements for the payment of food, lodging and other authorized expenses as may be necessary to host,

conduct, sponsor, or participate in homeland-security-related conferences, meetings, workshops, seminars, exercises or training sessions. The expenses may be paid directly to the contracting agency or business establishment.

O. 1. The Insurance Commissioner of the Insurance Department of the State of Oklahoma is hereby authorized to enter into contracts and agreements for the payment of food, lodging, and other authorized expenses as may be necessary to host, conduct, sponsor, or participate in conferences, meetings, or training sessions. The Commissioner may establish accounts as necessary for the collection and distribution of funds, including funds of sponsors and registration fees, related to such conferences, meetings, and training sessions. Any expenses incurred may be paid directly to the contracting agency or business establishment.

2. The cost of food for persons attending any conferences, meetings, and training sessions that do not require overnight travel shall not exceed the total daily rate as provided in the State Travel Reimbursement Act.

P. 1. The State Regents for Higher Education is hereby authorized to enter into contracts and agreements for the payment of food, lodging, and other authorized expenses as may be necessary to host, conduct, sponsor, or participate in conferences, meetings, or training sessions. The State Regents for Higher Education may establish accounts as necessary for the collection and distribution

of funds, including funds of sponsors and registration fees, related to such conferences, meetings, and training sessions. Any expenses incurred may be paid directly to the contracting agency or business establishment.

2. The cost of food for persons attending any conferences, meetings, and training sessions that do not require overnight travel shall not exceed the total daily rate as provided in the State Travel Reimbursement Act.

Q. 1. The Office of Educational Quality and Accountability is hereby authorized to enter into contracts and agreements for the payment of food, lodging, and other authorized expenses as may be necessary to host, conduct, sponsor, or participate in conferences, meetings, or training sessions. The Office of Educational Quality and Accountability may establish accounts as necessary for the collection and distribution of funds, including funds of sponsors and registration fees, related to such conferences, meetings, and training sessions. Any expenses incurred may be paid directly to the contracting agency or business establishment.

2. The cost of food for persons attending any conferences, meetings, and training sessions that do not require overnight travel shall not exceed the total daily rate as provided in the State Travel Reimbursement Act.

R. Whenever possible it shall be the policy of each state agency to prepay airline fares and lodging expenses using a purchase

card issued to the agency. This policy shall apply to instances where employees of the agency are traveling on behalf of state government.

Passed the House of Representatives the 20th day of May, 2015.

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Presiding Officer of the House
of Representatives

Passed the Senate the ___ day of _____, 2015.

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Presiding Officer of the Senate