

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5852

To amend the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to provide training services linked to employment demand through skills training grants, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 29, 2023

Mr. NORCROSS (for himself and Mr. HORSFORD) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL

To amend the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to provide training services linked to employment demand through skills training grants, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “21st Century Skills
5 are Key to Individuals’ Life-Long Success Act” or the
6 “21st Century SKILLS Act”.

7 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

8 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) In 1962, Congress authorized the first sub-
2 stantial Federal job training programs in the post-
3 war period, to retrain workers displaced because of
4 technological change.

5 (2) For nearly 60 years, Federal workforce de-
6 velopment programs have emphasized targeted edu-
7 cation and job training and reemployment activities,
8 service coordination and delivery, and a demand-
9 driven approach that is responsive to consumer
10 choice for participants and to the labor needs of
11 local employers.

12 (3) Now the 21st century economy demands
13 systems that equip workers to be able to think criti-
14 cally and creatively, solve complex problems, make
15 evidence-based decisions, adapt to evolving tech-
16 nologies, and work collaboratively.

17 (4) Increasing 21st century skills development
18 is linked to improving employment prospects and
19 work success. Removal of structural barriers to em-
20 ployment prospects and work success, such as im-
21 plicit bias, hiring discrimination, transportation
22 gaps, and housing insecurity, requires raising em-
23 ployer responsibility and job standards and improv-
24 ing connections for individuals with barriers to em-
25 ployment.

1 (5) Building on the functions of entities in the
2 workforce development system, including aggregating data and acting as catalysts to promote careers with good pay, will contribute to fostering inclusive economic growth.

6 (6) This Act, and the amendments made by this
7 Act, will remove barriers to inclusive economic
8 growth by allowing workers to access training opportunities through eligible providers of training services, including community colleges and registered apprenticeship programs, and by providing supportive services, including child care and transportation.

13 **SEC. 3. SKILLS TRAINING GRANTS.**

14 (a) DISCRETIONARY FUNDING FOR ACTIVITIES
15 OTHER THAN TRAINING SERVICES.—

16 (1) ALLOTMENTS.—Section 132 of the Work-
17 force Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C.
18 3172) is amended by adding at the end the following:

20 “(d) DISCRETIONARY AND MANDATORY FUNDING.—

21 “(1) MANDATORY FUNDING.—Notwithstanding
22 any other provision of this chapter, none of the
23 funds appropriated under subsection (a), (b), or (c)
24 of section 136, and allotted or otherwise provided
25 under this section, may be used to provide training

1 services, except under the provisions described in
2 paragraph (2). Funds appropriated under section
3 136(d) shall be used to provide training services and
4 supportive services under section 134(c)(3), and ad-
5 ditional sums described in section 134(c)(3)(C)(ii)
6 for career services under section 134(c)(2).

7 “(2) EXCEPTIONS.—The provisions described in
8 this paragraph are section 129(b), paragraph (2) or
9 (3) of section 134(a), or section 134(d), 169(c) or
10 170.”.

11 (2) ALLOCATIONS.—Section 133(b)(1) of such
12 Act (29 U.S.C. 3173(b)(1)) is amended by striking
13 “The” and inserting “Subject to section 132(d),
14 the”.

15 (b) MANDATORY FUNDING FOR TRAINING SERV-
16 ICES.—Section 134 of such Act (29 U.S.C. 3174) is
17 amended—

18 (1) by striking subsection (b) and inserting the
19 following:

20 “(b) LOCAL EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ACTIVI-
21 TIES.—

22 “(1) TRAINING SERVICES.—Funds appropriated
23 under section 136(d) shall be used to pay or reim-
24 burse local boards for the cost of providing training

1 services, supportive services, and career services as
2 described in section 136(d).

3 “(2) OTHER EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING AC-
4 TIVITIES.—Funds allocated to a local area for adults
5 under paragraph (2)(A) or (3), as appropriate, of
6 section 133(b), and funds allocated to a local area
7 for dislocated workers under section 133(b)(2)(B)—

8 “(A) shall be used to carry out employ-
9 ment and training activities described in sub-
10 section (c), other than subsection (c)(3), for
11 adults or dislocated workers, respectively; and

12 “(B) may be used to carry out employment
13 and training activities described in subsection
14 (d) for adults or dislocated workers, respec-
15 tively.”.

16 (c) SKILLS TRAINING GRANTS.—Section 134(c) of
17 such Act (29 U.S.C. 3174(c)) is amended—

18 (1) in paragraph (1)—

19 (A) in subparagraph (A)—

20 (i) by striking clause (iii); and

21 (ii) by redesignating clauses (iv) and
22 (v) as clauses (iii) and (iv), respectively;

23 (B) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as
24 subparagraph (C); and

1 (C) by inserting after subparagraph (A)
2 the following:

3 “(B) TRAINING SERVICES, SUPPORTIVE
4 SERVICES, AND CAREER SERVICES FUNDS.—
5 Funds appropriated under section 136(d) shall
6 be used to provide training services, supportive
7 services, and career services as described in sec-
8 tion 136(d) to adults and dislocated workers
9 who are eligible for the services involved.”;

10 (2) in paragraph (2)—

11 (A) in subparagraph (A), by striking
12 “Funds described in paragraph (1)” and insert-
13 ing “Funds described in paragraph (1) or made
14 available under paragraph (3)(C)(ii)”;

15 (B) by adding at the end the following:

16 “(D) PRIORITY.—With respect to funds al-
17 located to a local area for adult employment
18 and training activities under paragraph (2)(A)
19 or (3) of section 133(b), priority shall be given
20 to recipients of public assistance, other low-in-
21 come individuals, and individuals who are basic
22 skills deficient for receipt of career services de-
23 scribed in subparagraph (A)(xii). The appro-
24 priate local board and the Governor shall direct
25 the one-stop operators in the local area with re-

1 gard to making determinations related to such
2 priority.”; and

3 (3) in paragraph (3)—

4 (A) in subparagraph (A)(i)—

5 (i) in the matter preceding subclause

6 (I)—

7 (I) by striking “funds allocated

8 to a local area for adults under para-

9 graph (2)(A) or (3), as appropriate, of

10 section 133(b), and funds allocated to

11 the local area for dislocated workers

12 under section 133(b)(2)(B),” and in-

13 serting “funds appropriated under

14 section 136(d) and made available

15 under subparagraph (C)(i)”; and

16 (II) by striking “, respectively”;

17 and

18 (ii) in subclause (IV), by striking

19 “who are” and all that follows and insert-

20 ing “who meet the requirements of sub-

21 paragraph (E).”;

22 (B) by amending subparagraph (C) to read

23 as follows:

24 “(C) ARRANGEMENTS FOR OBTAINING

25 FEDERAL FUNDING.—

1 “(i) TRAINING SERVICES AND SUP-
2 PORTIVE SERVICES.—The Secretary shall
3 establish arrangements by which a local
4 board shall obtain payment in advance for
5 the cost of providing training services and
6 supportive services through skills training
7 grants or contracts to individuals who have
8 been determined to meet the requirements
9 of subparagraph (A) and are therefore eli-
10 gible for the services involved.

11 “(ii) CAREER SERVICES AND COORDI-
12 NATION ACTIVITIES.—When the Secretary
13 provides payment under clause (i) to a
14 local board for an amount under such
15 clause, the Secretary shall also provide an
16 additional sum equal to 10 percent of the
17 amount to the local board. The local board
18 shall use the additional sum to pay for—

19 “(I) career services described in
20 paragraph (2), including—

21 “(aa) making the services
22 described in clauses (v), (vii),
23 (ix), (x), (xi), and (xii) of para-
24 graph (2)(A) available to any
25 skills training grant recipient

1 outside of traditional working
2 hours, as defined by the Sec-
3 retary; and

4 “(bb) the provision of infor-
5 mation, in formats that are usa-
6 ble by and understandable to in-
7 dividuals eligible to receive serv-
8 ices through the one-stop delivery
9 system, about—

10 “(AA) the local avail-
11 ability of pre-apprenticeship
12 and apprenticeship pro-
13 grams, and the costs of
14 these programs to the skills
15 training grant recipient as
16 compared to the costs of
17 training programs provided
18 by other eligible providers of
19 training services; and

20 “(BB) apprenticeship
21 programs in industries in
22 which apprenticeship pro-
23 grams have not been tradi-
24 tionally used, including in-
25 formation for populations

1 traditionally underrep-
2 resented in apprenticeship
3 programs; and

4 “(II) activities to build relation-
5 ships between local boards and local
6 eligible providers of training services,
7 such as—

8 “(aa) working with such
9 local eligible providers to improve
10 data reporting to local boards on
11 the primary indicators of per-
12 formance described in subclauses
13 (I) through (IV) of section
14 116(b)(2)(A)(i) and, if the local
15 boards and local eligible pro-
16 viders agree, any primary indi-
17 cator of performance described in
18 subclause (V) or (VI) of such
19 section;

20 “(bb) negotiating with such
21 local eligible providers of training
22 services regarding any adjusted
23 levels of performance required by
24 the local board under section
25 122(b)(3); and

1 “(cc) coordinating with local
2 providers of training services and
3 the State to update the list of eli-
4 gible providers of training serv-
5 ices described in section
6 122(d).”;

7 (C) in subparagraph (D), by adding at the
8 end the following:

9 “Notwithstanding any other provision of this
10 subparagraph, solely for purposes of this para-
11 graph, training services shall not include in-
12 struction, at an institution of higher education
13 that provides a 4-year program of instruction,
14 towards a baccalaureate or post-baccalaureate
15 degree.”;

16 (D) by striking subparagraph (E) and in-
17 serting the following:

18 “(E) EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME.—To be
19 eligible to receive training services and sup-
20 portive services under this paragraph, an indi-
21 vidual shall—

22 “(i)(I) be a dislocated worker;

23 “(II) be eligible for and receiving un-
24 employment compensation under any Fed-
25 eral unemployment compensation law;

1 “(III) be unemployed and have ex-
2 hausted all unemployment compensation
3 benefits available to the individual; or

4 “(IV) be employed for at least 6 of
5 the last 12 months and have an income
6 that is not more than 100 percent of the
7 State median income in the State in which
8 the individual resides; and

9 “(ii) be a member of a household with
10 an adjusted gross income of not more than
11 \$150,000.”;

12 (E) in subparagraph (F)—

13 (i) in clause (ii), by inserting before
14 “Each” the following: “Training services
15 shall be provided through providers identi-
16 fied in accordance with section 122.”;

17 (ii) by striking clause (iii) and insert-
18 ing the following:

19 “(iii) SKILLS TRAINING GRANTS.—

20 “(I) IN GENERAL.—An individual
21 who seeks training services and who is
22 eligible pursuant to this paragraph,
23 may, in consultation with a career
24 counselor, select an eligible provider of
25 training services from the list of pro-

1 viders described in clause (ii). If the
2 individual is seeking a high school
3 equivalency program that is not
4 aligned with a career pathway, the
5 provider shall demonstrate that the
6 program meets relevant requirements
7 of the State educational agency in-
8 volved for a high school education.
9 Upon such selection, the local board
10 involved shall establish a skills train-
11 ing grant for the individual, which
12 shall allow the individual to pay for
13 such services and any supportive serv-
14 ices (including provision of payments
15 for child care, transportation, required
16 books, equipment, or examination
17 fees) that are necessary to enable the
18 individual to participate in the train-
19 ing services provided by the selected
20 provider.

21 “(II) ADMINISTRATION.—The
22 local board shall hold and administer
23 the skills training grant funds for the
24 participating individuals served by the
25 local board, and shall use such funds

1 to reimburse all providers of training
2 services and supportive service pro-
3 viders for the individual. The Sec-
4 retary shall determine the appropriate
5 costs for which such skills training
6 grant may be used, and shall develop
7 methods of verifying whether such
8 grant was used for those costs.

9 “(III) ABILITY TO CONTRACT.—

10 A local board may enter into a con-
11 tract or other agreement with a local
12 entity, including an institution of
13 higher education, labor organization,
14 or community-based organization, to
15 enable the entity to provide skills
16 training grant enrollment assistance
17 or career services (as described in
18 subparagraph (C)(ii)(I)) at a location,
19 or in a manner, that is convenient for
20 eligible individuals.”; and

21 (iii) in clause (iv), by striking “indi-
22 vidual training accounts” and inserting
23 “skills training grants”;
24 (F) in subparagraph (G)—

1 (i) in the subparagraph heading, by
2 striking “INDIVIDUAL TRAINING AC-
3 COUNTS” and inserting “SKILLS TRAINING
4 GRANTS”;

5 (ii) by redesignating clauses (ii)
6 through (iv) as clauses (vii) through (ix),
7 respectively;

8 (iii) by striking clause (i) and insert-
9 ing the following:

10 “(i) GRANTS.—Except as provided in
11 clause (iv), training services and supportive
12 services provided under this paragraph
13 shall be provided through the use of skills
14 training grants in accordance with this
15 paragraph, and shall be provided to eligible
16 individuals through the one-stop delivery
17 system.

18 “(ii) AMOUNT.—Each individual who
19 seeks training services (except services pro-
20 vided under clause (vii)) and who is eligible
21 for training services pursuant to this para-
22 graph shall receive a skills training grant
23 that—

24 “(I) if the individual is a dis-
25 located worker or is a low-income in-

1 dividual, is in an amount of \$10,000,
2 increased in accordance with clause
3 (iii);

4 “(II) if the individual has a
5 household income that is more than
6 100 percent of the poverty line but
7 not more than 150 percent of the pov-
8 erty line, is in an amount of \$8,000,
9 increased in accordance with clause
10 (iii); and

11 “(III) if the individual has a
12 household income that is more than
13 150 percent but not more than 200
14 percent of the poverty line, is in an
15 amount of \$6,000, increased in ac-
16 cordance with clause (iii).

17 “(iii) ADJUSTMENT FOR INFLA-
18 TION.—Beginning in fiscal year 2025, the
19 Secretary shall annually adjust each
20 amount described in subclauses (I) through
21 (III) of clause (ii) by the estimated per-
22 centage increase, if any, in the Consumer
23 Price Index for the most recent full cal-
24 endar year.

25 “(iv) LIMIT ON PROGRAM COSTS.—

1 “(I) IN GENERAL.—Subject to
2 subclause (II), the tuition and fees of
3 a program of training services pro-
4 vided through the use of a skills train-
5 ing grant shall not exceed 110 percent
6 of the amount equal to average tuition
7 and fees (calculated for the most re-
8 cent 3-year period preceding the par-
9 ticipant’s enrollment in the program
10 for which the tuition and fees are
11 being determined under this clause) of
12 a comparable program at a commu-
13 nity college in the local area in which
14 the participant resides.

15 “(II) EXCEPTION.—Subclause (I)
16 shall not apply to a program of train-
17 ing services if a local board deter-
18 mines that an employer will pay any
19 costs of such program that exceed 110
20 percent of the average tuition and fees
21 described in subclause (I).

22 “(v) TIMING.—An individual who re-
23 ceives a skills training grant under this
24 paragraph shall enroll in a program of
25 training services not later than 3 months

1 after receiving the grants. Any remaining
2 funds in the skills training grant not used
3 upon the exit of the program by the partic-
4 ipant will no longer be available for such
5 participant. No individual may receive
6 more than one skills training grant in any
7 5-year period.

8 “(vi) AWARENESS CAMPAIGN.—Dur-
9 ing the first year for which skills training
10 grants are available to eligible individuals,
11 the Secretary shall carry out a national in-
12 formation campaign to raise awareness
13 about skills training grants and their avail-
14 ability and use, which may include running
15 public awareness campaigns at the State
16 or local level informing eligible individuals
17 and employers about the skills training
18 grants.”;

19 (iv) in clause (vii), as redesignated by
20 clause (ii) of this subparagraph—

21 (I) in the matter preceding sub-
22 clause (I), by striking “individual
23 training account” and inserting “skills
24 training grant”; and

1 (II) in subclause (III), by strik-
2 ing “individual training accounts” and
3 inserting “skills training grants”; and
4 (v) in clause (ix), as redesignated by
5 clause (ii) of this subparagraph—

6 (I) by striking “individual train-
7 ing accounts” each place it appears
8 and inserting “skills training grants”;
9 and

10 (II) by striking “clause (ii)” and
11 inserting “clause (vii)”; and

12 (G) in subparagraph (H), by adding at the
13 end the following:

14 “(iii) PROVIDER QUALIFICATION.—
15 The on-the-job training shall be provided
16 through providers identified in accordance
17 with section 122(h).”.

18 (d) PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR TRAINING
19 SERVICES PROVIDERS.—Section 122(c)(2) of such Act
20 (29 U.S.C. 3152(c)(2)) is amended by adding at the end
21 the following: “The Governor shall establish levels of per-
22 formance on the indicators of performance described in
23 subclauses (I) through (IV) of section 116(b)(2)(A)(i) that
24 a provider of training services shall be required to meet
25 or exceed, based on the performance of all individuals re-

1 ceiving the training services, in order to renew eligibility
2 under this paragraph and remain on the list of providers
3 under subsection (d).”.

4 (e) MANDATORY APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 136 of
5 such Act (29 U.S.C. 3181) is amended by adding at the
6 end the following:

7 “(d) TRAINING SERVICES.—There are authorized to
8 be appropriated and there are appropriated such sums as
9 may be necessary for each fiscal year to provide training
10 services and supportive services under section 134(c)(3),
11 and the additional sums described in section
12 134(e)(3)(C)(ii) for career services under section
13 134(e)(2).”.

14 (f) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

15 (1) Section 108(b)(19) of such Act (29 U.S.C.
16 3123(b)(19)) is amended by striking “individual
17 training accounts” and inserting “skills training
18 grants”.

19 (2) Section 122(g) of such Act (29 U.S.C.
20 3152(g)) is amended by striking “individual training
21 accounts” and inserting “skills training grants”.

22 **SEC. 4. TRAINING SERVICES CLEARINGHOUSE.**

23 (a) AMENDMENT.—Subtitle E of title I of the Work-
24 force Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3241 et
25 seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

1 **“SEC. 196. CAREERONESTOP WEBSITE.**

2 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall maintain the
3 CareerOneStop website in a manner that ensures the
4 website includes the information and features described in
5 this section.

6 “(b) SKILLS TRAINING GRANT PORTAL.—The
7 website shall contain a portal, for the use of individuals
8 who are eligible for skills training grants under section
9 134(c)(3), to request such grants. Skills training grants
10 shall be distributed by local boards, in accordance with
11 that section.

12 “(c) LIST OF APPROVED TRAINING PROVIDERS.—
13 The website shall contain the lists of eligible providers of
14 training services prepared by Governors under section
15 122(d)(1) and information identifying eligible providers as
16 determined by one-stop operators under section 122(h)(1).

17 “(d) INFORMATION ON PROGRAMS OF TRAINING
18 SERVICES.—The website shall contain, for each program
19 of training services provided under section 134(c)(3), in-
20 formation on—

21 “(1) the demographics, such as the sex, race,
22 ethnicity, median age, and education level, of par-
23 ticipants in the program;

24 “(2) performance, as measured on the indica-
25 tors described in subclauses (I) through (IV) of sec-
26 tion 116(b)(2)(A)(i); and

1 “(3) the cost of attendance, including costs of
2 tuition and fees, for participants in the program.

3 “(e) TOOLS FOR ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.—The
4 website shall contain tools to enable individuals who are
5 eligible to receive such training services to compare per-
6 formance data across programs of training services, pro-
7 viders of such services, and States.

8 “(f) RESOURCES FOR PROVIDERS OF TRAINING
9 SERVICES.—The website shall contain resources for pro-
10 viders of training services, including guidance on each
11 State that specifies—

12 “(1) the criteria, requirements, and procedures
13 that a provider shall meet to be listed as an eligible
14 provider under section 122(d)(1) or identified as an
15 eligible provider under section 122(h)(1) in the
16 State; and

17 “(2) the minimum levels for the State described
18 in section 122(b)(1)(A)(i).

19 “(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
20 is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
21 such sums as may be necessary.”.

22 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of
23 such Act is amended by inserting after the item relating
24 to section 195 the following:

“Sec. 196. CareerOneStop website.”.

○