

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 6601

To amend the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to codify a competitive grant program to build community colleges' capacity to provide employment and training programs for in-demand industries or occupations.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 5, 2023

Mrs. MCBATH (for herself, Mrs. HAYES, Mr. BOWMAN, Mr. TAKANO, and Mr. THOMPSON of California) 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 codify a competitive grant program to build community colleges' capacity to provide employment and training programs for in-demand industries or occupations.

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 “Training, Retention,
5 And Investment Now for a Better America Act” or the
6 “TRAIN Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY COLLEGES TRAIN-**
2 **ING GRANTS PROGRAM.**

3 Subtitle D of title I of the Workforce Innovation and
4 Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3221 et seq.) is amended—

5 (1) by redesignating section 172 as section 173;

6 and

7 (2) by inserting after section 171 the following:

8 **“SEC. 172. STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY COLLEGES**
9 **TRAINING GRANTS PROGRAM.**

10 “(a) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this section are—

11 “(1) to establish, improve, or expand high-quality
12 educational or career training programs at com-
13 munity colleges; and

14 “(2) to expand opportunities for individuals to
15 obtain recognized postsecondary credentials that are
16 nationally or regionally portable and stackable for
17 high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupa-
18 tions.

19 “(b) STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY COLLEGES
20 TRAINING GRANTS PROGRAM.—

21 “(1) IN GENERAL.—From the amounts appro-
22 priated to carry out this section under subsection (k)
23 and not reserved under paragraph (2), the Secretary
24 shall, on a competitive basis, make grants to eligible
25 institutions to carry out the activities described in
26 subsection (e).

1 “(2) RESERVATION.—Of the amounts appro-
2 priated to carry out this section under subsection
3 (k), the Secretary may reserve not more than two
4 percent for the administration of grants awarded
5 under this section, including—

6 “(A) providing technical assistance and
7 targeted outreach to support eligible institu-
8 tions serving a high number or high percentage
9 of low-income individuals or individuals with
10 barriers to employment, and rural-serving eligi-
11 ble institutions, to provide guidance and assist-
12 ance in the process of applying for grants under
13 this section; and

14 “(B) evaluating and reporting on the per-
15 formance and impact of activities funded under
16 this section in accordance with subsections (f)
17 through (h).

18 “(c) AWARD PERIODS.—

19 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Each grant under this sec-
20 tion shall be awarded for a grant period of not more
21 than 4 years.

22 “(2) SUBSEQUENT GRANTS.—An eligible insti-
23 tution that receives a grant for a 4-year grant period
24 under this section may receive one or more addi-
25 tional grants under this section for periods of not

1 more than 4 years, if the Secretary determines that
2 the eligible institution's performance with respect to
3 activities supported by each preceding grant received
4 under this section qualifies the institution for such
5 additional grant.

6 “(d) APPLICATION.—

7 “(1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive a
8 grant under this section, an eligible institution shall
9 submit an application to the Secretary at such time,
10 in such manner, and containing such information as
11 the Secretary may require.

12 “(2) CONTENTS.—At a minimum, an applica-
13 tion submitted by an eligible institution under para-
14 graph (1) shall include each the following:

15 “(A) A description of the community col-
16 lege and industry partnership to be established
17 by the eligible institution under subsection
18 (e)(1), including—

19 “(i) the expected participation and re-
20 sponsibilities of each of the partners in-
21 cluded in the community college and indus-
22 try partnership;

23 “(ii) evidence of such partnership's
24 capacity to carry out activities described in
25 subsection (e); and

1 “(iii) the methods and strategies the
2 partnership will use to engage with em-
3 ployers in in-demand industry sectors or
4 occupations.

5 “(B) A description of the industries or sec-
6 tors to be served by the activities to be carried
7 out under the grant, including—

8 “(i) how such industries or sectors
9 will be identified by the eligible institution
10 through working with businesses, industry
11 associations and organizations, labor orga-
12 nizations, labor management organizations,
13 State boards, local boards, economic devel-
14 opment agencies, or other organizations
15 that the eligible institution determines nec-
16 essary; and

17 “(ii) data demonstrating such indus-
18 tries or sectors are aligned with employer
19 demand in the geographic area to be
20 served by the eligible institution with such
21 grant.

22 “(C) The extent to which the eligible insti-
23 tution has prior experience in leading capacity
24 building projects, which demonstrates such in-
25 stitution’s ability to accomplish multi-pronged,

1 complex projects and an explanation of the re-
2 sults of any such projects.

3 “(D) The extent to which the eligible insti-
4 tution can—

5 “(i) leverage additional resources to
6 support the education or career training
7 program, career pathway program, or
8 work-based learning program described in
9 subsection (e)(2)(A) to be funded with the
10 grant; and

11 “(ii) demonstrate the future sustain-
12 ability of such program.

13 “(E) A description of each proposed pro-
14 gram referred to in subparagraph (D)(i) to be
15 supported by the grant, including—

16 “(i) whether such program—

17 “(I) is part of a career pathway;

18 and

19 “(II) includes an integrated edu-
20 cation and training;

21 “(ii) steps the eligible institution will
22 take to ensure the quality of such program;
23 and

1 “(iii) the estimated number of individ-
2 uals to receive training under such pro-
3 gram.

4 “(F) A description of any recognized post-
5 secondary credential that the eligible institution
6 proposes to offer or develop using such grant,
7 and an assurance that such credential shall
8 be—

9 “(i) nationally portable;

10 “(ii) an industry recognized credential
11 in an industry that the eligible institution
12 proposes to support using the grant or, if
13 not available for such industry, another
14 credential determined by the Secretary to
15 be appropriate; and

16 “(iii) related to the in-demand indus-
17 try or sector that the eligible partnership
18 proposes to support using the grant, and
19 stackable with respect to other credentials.

20 “(G) A description of how each credential
21 described in subparagraph (F) is aligned with
22 quality job opportunities, including, with re-
23 spect to such opportunities—

24 “(i) the wage level, and whether such
25 wages support economic self-sufficiency;

1 “(ii) the availability of benefits, such
2 as paid time off, health insurance, and re-
3 tirement savings plan;

4 “(iii) the availability of predictable
5 work hours;

6 “(iv) the history of employer compli-
7 ance with Federal and State health, safety,
8 and employment standards; and

9 “(v) the opportunities for advance-
10 ment within an industry or sector, which
11 may include additional education and
12 training opportunities and mentorship.

13 “(H) The needs that will be addressed by
14 the community college and industry partnership
15 supported by the grant.

16 “(I) A description of the population and
17 geographic area to be served by the eligible in-
18 stitution, including how—

19 “(i) such eligible institution will serve
20 unemployed individuals, low-income indi-
21 viduals, dislocated workers, individuals
22 with barriers to employment, individuals
23 with disabilities, veterans, and women; and

24 “(ii) the programs described in sub-
25 section (e) will support access and elimi-

1 nate barriers to training and employment
2 for individuals described under clause (i).

3 “(J) The evidence upon which the edu-
4 cation and training strategies to be used in the
5 programs are based and an explanation of how
6 such evidence influenced the design of the edu-
7 cational or training programs to improve edu-
8 cation and employment outcomes.

9 “(K) A description of the activities to be
10 carried out under the grant, and whether, and
11 to what extent, such activities are expected to
12 align with the workforce strategies identified
13 in—

14 “(i) any State plan or local plan sub-
15 mitted under this Act by the State, out-
16 lying area, or locality in which the partner-
17 ship is expected to operate;

18 “(ii) any State plan submitted under
19 section 122 of the Carl D. Perkins Career
20 and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20
21 U.S.C. 2342) by such State or outlying
22 area; and

23 “(iii) any economic development plan
24 of the chief executive of such State or out-
25 lying area.

1 “(L) The goals of the eligible institution
2 with respect to—

3 “(i) capacity building (as described in
4 subsection (f)(1)(B)); and

5 “(ii) the expected performance of indi-
6 viduals participating in the programs to be
7 offered by the eligible institution, including
8 with respect to performance applicable
9 under section 116 or subsection (f) of this
10 section.

11 “(3) CONSIDERATION OF PREVIOUS EXPERI-
12 ENCE.—The Secretary may not disqualify an other-
13 wise eligible institution from receiving a grant under
14 this section solely because such institution lacks pre-
15 vious experience in capacity building projects, as de-
16 scribed in subparagraph (2)(C).

17 “(4) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this
18 section, the Secretary shall give priority to eligible
19 entities that will use the grant to serve—

20 “(A) individuals with barriers to employ-
21 ment; or

22 “(B) incumbent workers who need to gain
23 or improve foundational skills to enhance their
24 employability.

25 “(e) USES OF FUNDS.—

1 “(1) COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND INDUSTRY
2 PARTNERSHIP.—For the purpose of carrying out the
3 activities specified in paragraphs (2) and (3), an eli-
4 gible institution that receives a grant under this sec-
5 tion shall establish a community college and industry
6 partnership, or continue an existing partnership,
7 with one or more employers in an in-demand indus-
8 try sector or occupation and shall maintain such
9 partnership for the duration of the grant period.
10 The eligible institution shall ensure that the partner-
11 ship—

12 “(A) targets one or more specific in-de-
13 mand industry or sector;

14 “(B) supports industry recognized creden-
15 tials that are aligned with quality job opportu-
16 nities;

17 “(C) includes collaboration with the work-
18 force development system;

19 “(D) serves adult and dislocated workers,
20 incumbent workers, and new entrants to the
21 workforce;

22 “(E) uses an evidence-based program de-
23 sign that is appropriate for the activities carried
24 out by the partnership; and

1 “(F) incorporates, to the extent appro-
2 priate, virtual service delivery to facilitate tech-
3 nology-enabled learning.

4 “(2) REQUIRED ACTIVITIES.—The partnership
5 established by the eligible institution under para-
6 graph (1), shall—

7 “(A) establish, improve, or expand high
8 quality, evidence-based education or career
9 training programs, career pathway programs, or
10 work-based learning programs (including ap-
11 prenticeship programs or pre-apprenticeships
12 that qualify an individual for participation in an
13 apprenticeship program) that are aligned with
14 industry recognized credentials and quality job
15 opportunities; and

16 “(B) use not less than 15 percent of the
17 grant to provide supportive services to individ-
18 uals participating in the programs funded with
19 the grant to facilitate retention and program
20 completion, which may include—

21 “(i) childcare, transportation, mental
22 health services, substance use disorder pre-
23 vention and treatment, and assistance in
24 obtaining health insurance coverage and
25 housing;

1 “(ii) assistance in accessing State and
2 Federal means-tested benefits programs;

3 “(iii) career navigation, coaching,
4 mentorship, and case management serv-
5 ices, including providing information and
6 outreach to individuals with barriers to
7 employment to encourage such individuals
8 to participate in programs funded with the
9 grant; and

10 “(iv) providing access to course mate-
11 rials, technological devices, required equip-
12 ment, and other supports necessary for
13 participation in and successful completion
14 of such programs.

15 “(3) ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES.—In addition to
16 the activities required under paragraph (2), the
17 partnership established under paragraph (1) shall
18 carry out one or more of the following activities:

19 “(A) Establish, improve, or expand—

20 “(i) articulation agreements (as de-
21 fined in section 486A(a) of the Higher
22 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
23 1093a(a)));

24 “(ii) credit transfer agreements;

1 “(iii) corequisite remediation pro-
2 grams that enable a student to receive re-
3 medial education services while enrolled in
4 a postsecondary course rather than requir-
5 ing the student to receive remedial edu-
6 cation before enrolling in a such a course;

7 “(iv) dual or concurrent enrollment
8 programs;

9 “(v) competency-based education and
10 assessment; or

11 “(vi) policies and processes to award
12 academic credit for prior learning or for
13 the programs described in paragraph (2).

14 “(B) Make available, in a format that is
15 open, searchable, and easily comparable, infor-
16 mation on—

17 “(i) curricula and recognized postsec-
18 ondary credentials offered through pro-
19 grams funded with the grant, including
20 any curricula or credentials created or fur-
21 ther developed using such grant;

22 “(ii) the skills or competencies devel-
23 oped by individuals who participate in such
24 programs; and

1 “(iii) related employment and earn-
2 ings outcomes.

3 “(C) Establish or implement plans for pro-
4 viders of the programs described in paragraph
5 (2) to meet the criteria and carry out the proce-
6 dures necessary to be included on the eligible
7 training services provider list described in sec-
8 tion 122(d).

9 “(D) Purchase, lease, or refurbish special-
10 ized equipment as necessary to carry out such
11 programs.

12 “(E) Reduce or eliminate unmet financial
13 need relating to participants’ cost of attendance
14 (as defined under section 472 of the Higher
15 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087ll)) in
16 such programs.

17 “(4) ADMINISTRATIVE COST LIMIT.—An eligible
18 institution may use not more than 10 percent of the
19 funds received under this section for administrative
20 costs, including costs related to collecting informa-
21 tion, analysis, and coordination for purposes of sub-
22 section (f).

23 “(f) PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES AND PERFORMANCE
24 REVIEWS.—

1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall con-
2 duct an annual performance review with respect to
3 activities carried out under this section, which shall
4 include—

5 “(A) an assessment of outcomes of stu-
6 dents who participated in an education or train-
7 ing program supported by a grant under this
8 section, including whether such students have
9 proficient levels of performance based on indica-
10 tors described in section 116(b);

11 “(B) the extent to which the eligible insti-
12 tution—

13 “(i) engaged employers and secured
14 investment in educational and training pro-
15 grams in the in-demand industry sectors
16 and occupations targeted by the eligible in-
17 stitution;

18 “(ii) utilized, designed, or imple-
19 mented new and accelerated instructional
20 techniques or technologies, including the
21 use of advanced online and technology-en-
22 abled learning; and

23 “(iii) supported program and policy
24 alignment across systems and addressed
25 duplicative services or service gaps; and

1 “(C) such other indicators of success as
2 determined by the Secretary.

3 “(2) FAILURE TO MEET PROFICIENT PERFORM-
4 ANCE.—After conducting a performance review
5 under paragraph (1), if the Secretary determines
6 that an eligible institution did not achieve proficient
7 performance based on the criteria described in such
8 paragraph the Secretary shall—

9 “(A) provide technical assistance to the eli-
10 gible institution; and

11 “(B) develop a performance improvement
12 plan for the eligible institution.

13 “(g) EVALUATIONS AND REPORTS.—

14 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5 years
15 after the date on which the first grant is made
16 under this section, the Secretary shall design and
17 conduct an evaluation to determine the overall effec-
18 tiveness of the eligible institutions receiving a grant
19 under this section.

20 “(2) ELEMENTS.—The evaluation conducted
21 under paragraph (1) shall include an assessment of
22 the general effectiveness of programs and activities
23 supported by grants awarded under this section, in-
24 cluding the extent to which the programs and activi-
25 ties—

1 “(A) developed new or expanded existing
2 successful industry sector strategies, including
3 the extent to which such eligible institutions
4 deepened employer engagement and developed
5 education and training programs that met in-
6 dustry skill needs;

7 “(B) created, expanded, or enhanced ca-
8 reer pathways, including the extent to which the
9 eligible institutions developed or improved com-
10 petency-based education and assessment, credit
11 for prior learning, modularized and self-paced
12 curricula, integrated education and career
13 training, dual enrollment in secondary and post-
14 secondary career pathways, stacked and latticed
15 credentials, and online and distance learning;

16 “(C) created alignment between commu-
17 nity colleges and the workforce development
18 system;

19 “(D) assisted individuals with finding, re-
20 taining, or advancing in employment;

21 “(E) assisted individuals with earning rec-
22 ognized postsecondary credentials;

23 “(F) served various demographic groups,
24 including people of different geographic loca-
25 tions, ages, races, national origins, and sex; and

1 “(G) increased access to industry recog-
2 nized credentials and supported pathways to
3 quality job opportunities for individuals with
4 barriers to employment.

5 “(3) DESIGN REQUIREMENTS.—The evaluation
6 under this subsection shall—

7 “(A) be designed by the Secretary (acting
8 through the Chief Evaluation Officer) in con-
9 junction with the eligible institutions being eval-
10 uated;

11 “(B) include analysis of participant feed-
12 back and outcome and process measures; and

13 “(C) use designs that employ the most rig-
14 orous analytical and statistical methods that
15 are reasonably feasible, such as the use of con-
16 trol groups.

17 “(4) DATA ACCESSIBILITY.—The Secretary
18 shall make available on a publicly accessible website
19 of the Department of Labor any data collected as
20 part of the evaluation under this subsection. Such
21 data shall be made available in an aggregated for-
22 mat that does not reveal personally identifiable in-
23 formation.

1 “(5) PUBLICATION AND REPORTING OF EVAL-
2 UATION FINDINGS.—The Secretary (acting through
3 the Chief Evaluation Officer) shall—

4 “(A) not later than one year after the ini-
5 tial award of grants under this section, publish
6 an interim report on the preliminary results of
7 the evaluation conducted under this subsection;

8 “(B) not later than 60 days after the date
9 on which the evaluation is completed under this
10 subsection, submit to the Committee on Edu-
11 cation and the Workforce of the House of Rep-
12 resentatives and the Committee on Health,
13 Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate
14 a report on such evaluation; and

15 “(C) not later than 90 days after such
16 completion date, publish and make the results
17 of the evaluation available on a publicly acces-
18 sible website of the Department of Labor.

19 “(h) ANNUAL REPORTS.—The Secretary shall make
20 available on a publicly accessible website of the Depart-
21 ment of Labor, in transparent, linked, open, and inter-
22 operable data formats, the following information:

23 “(1) The performance of eligible institution
24 based on the assessment of student outcomes de-
25 scribed in subsection (f)(1)(A).

1 “(2) The number of individuals enrolled in em-
2 ployment and training activities funded with a grant
3 under this section.

4 “(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

5 “(1) COMMUNITY COLLEGE.—The term ‘com-
6 munity college’ means—

7 “(A) a public institution of higher edu-
8 cation (as defined in section 101(a) of the
9 Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1001(a)), at
10 which—

11 “(i) the highest degree awarded is an
12 associate degree; or

13 “(ii) an associate degree is the most
14 frequently awarded degree;

15 “(B) a branch campus of a 4-year public
16 institution of higher education (as defined in
17 section 101 of the Higher Education Act of
18 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)), if, at such branch
19 campus—

20 “(i) the highest degree awarded is an
21 associate degree; or

22 “(ii) an associate degree is the most
23 frequently awarded degree;

24 “(C) a 2-year Tribal College or University
25 (as defined in section 316(b)(3) of the Higher

1 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
2 1059c(b)(3)); or

3 “(D) a degree-granting Tribal College or
4 University (as defined in section 316(b)(3) of
5 the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
6 1059c(b)(3))) at which—

7 “(i) the highest degree awarded is an
8 associate degree; or

9 “(ii) an associate degree is the most
10 frequently awarded degree.

11 “(2) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term ‘eligi-
12 ble institution’ means—

13 “(A) a community college;

14 “(B) a postsecondary vocational institution
15 (as defined in section 102(c) of the Higher
16 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002(c)); or

17 “(C) a consortium of such colleges or insti-
18 tutions.

19 “(j) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—Funds made
20 available under this section shall be used to supplement,
21 and not supplant other Federal, State, and local public
22 funds made available for carrying out the activities de-
23 scribed in this section.

1 “(k) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
2 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this sec-
3 tion—

4 “(1) \$110,000,000 for fiscal year 2024;

5 “(2) \$121,000,000 for fiscal year 2025;

6 “(3) \$133,000,000 for fiscal year 2026;

7 “(4) \$146,000,000 for fiscal year 2027;

8 “(5) \$161,000,000 for fiscal year 2028; and

9 “(6) \$176,000,000 for fiscal year 2029.”.

10 **SEC. 3. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS TO THE TABLE OF**
11 **CONTENTS.**

12 The table of contents of the Workforce Innovation
13 and Opportunity Act in section 1(b) is amended—

14 (1) by striking the item relating to section 172;

15 and

16 (2) by inserting after the item relating to sec-
17 tion 171, the following:

“Sec. 172. Strengthening community colleges training grants program.

“Sec. 173. Authorization of appropriations.”.

○