

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 2784

To amend title 46 to establish a grant program for developing, offering, or improving educational or career training programs for American workers related to the maritime workforce.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 21, 2021

Mr. WICKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To amend title 46 to establish a grant program for developing, offering, or improving educational or career training programs for American workers related to the maritime workforce.

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 “Maritime Techno-
5 logical Advancement Act of 2021”.

1 **SEC. 2. CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE FOR DOMESTIC MARI-**
 2 **TIME WORKFORCE.**

3 Section 51706 of title 46, United States Code, is
 4 amended—

5 (1) in subsection (a), by striking “of Transpor-
 6 tation”;

7 (2) in subsection (b), in the subsection heading,
 8 by striking “ASSISTANCE” and inserting “COOPERA-
 9 TIVE AGREEMENTS”;

10 (3) by redesignating subsection (c) as sub-
 11 section (d);

12 (4) in subsection (d), as redesignated by para-
 13 graph (2), by adding at the end the following:

14 “(3) SECRETARY.—The term ‘Secretary’ means
 15 the Secretary of Transportation.”; and

16 (5) by inserting after subsection (b) the fol-
 17 lowing:

18 “(c) GRANT PROGRAM.—

19 “(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

20 “(A) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ‘Admin-
 21 istrator’ means the Administrator of the Mari-
 22 time Administration.

23 “(B) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term
 24 ‘eligible institution’ means a postsecondary edu-
 25 cational institution (as such term is defined in
 26 section 3 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and

1 Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C.
2 2302)) that offers a 2-year program of study,
3 a 1-year program of training, or is a postsec-
4 ondary vocational institution, and that offers
5 educational or career training programs for
6 American workers in the United States mari-
7 time industry.

8 “(C) UNITED STATES MARITIME INDUS-
9 TRY.—The term ‘United States maritime indus-
10 try’ means all segments of the maritime-related
11 transportation system of the United States,
12 both in domestic and foreign trade, and in
13 coastal, offshore, and inland waters, as well as
14 non-commercial maritime activities, such as
15 pleasure boating and marine sciences (including
16 all scientific research vessels), and all of the in-
17 dustries that support such uses, including vessel
18 construction and repair, vessel operations, ship
19 logistics supply, berthing, port operations, port
20 intermodal operations, marine terminal oper-
21 ations, vessel design, marine brokerage, marine
22 insurance, marine financing, chartering, mari-
23 time-oriented supply chain operations, offshore
24 industry, and maritime-oriented research and
25 development.

1 “(2) GRANT AUTHORIZATION.—

2 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year
3 after the date of enactment of the Maritime
4 Technological Advancement Act of 2021, the
5 Administrator may award maritime career
6 training grants to eligible institutions for the
7 purpose of developing, offering, or improving
8 educational or career training programs for
9 American workers related to the maritime work-
10 force.

11 “(B) GUIDELINES.—Not later than 1 year
12 after the date of enactment of the Maritime
13 Technological Advancement Act of 2021, the
14 Administrator shall—

15 “(i) promulgate guidelines for the
16 submission of grant proposals under this
17 subsection; and

18 “(ii) publish and maintain such guide-
19 lines on the website of the Maritime Ad-
20 ministration.

21 “(3) LIMITATIONS.—The Administrator may
22 not award a grant under this subsection in an
23 amount that is more than \$20,000,000.

24 “(4) REQUIRED INFORMATION.—

1 “(A) IN GENERAL.—An eligible institution
2 that desires to receive a grant under this sub-
3 section shall submit to the Administrator a
4 grant proposal that includes a detailed descrip-
5 tion of—

6 “(i) the specific project for which the
7 grant proposal is submitted, including the
8 manner in which the grant will be used to
9 develop, offer, or improve an educational
10 or career training program that is suited
11 to maritime industry workers;

12 “(ii) the extent to which the project
13 for which the grant proposal is submitted
14 will meet the educational or career training
15 needs of maritime workers in the commu-
16 nity served by the eligible institution;

17 “(iii) the extent to which the project
18 for which the grant proposal is submitted
19 fits within any overall strategic plan devel-
20 oped by an eligible community; and

21 “(iv) any previous experience of the
22 eligible institution in providing maritime
23 educational or career training programs.

24 “(B) COMMUNITY OUTREACH REQUIRED.—

25 In order to be considered by the Administrator,

1 a grant proposal submitted by an eligible insti-
2 tution under this subsection shall—

3 “(i) demonstrate that the eligible in-
4 stitution—

5 “(I) reached out to employers to
6 identify—

7 “(aa) any shortcomings in
8 existing maritime educational
9 and career training opportunities
10 available to workers in the com-
11 munity; and

12 “(bb) any future employ-
13 ment opportunities within the
14 community and the educational
15 and career training skills re-
16 quired for workers to meet the
17 future maritime employment de-
18 mand; and

19 “(II) reached out to other simi-
20 larly situated institutions in an effort
21 to benefit from any best practices that
22 may be shared with respect to pro-
23 viding maritime educational or career
24 training programs to workers eligible
25 for training; and

1 “(ii) include a detailed description
2 of—

3 “(I) the extent and outcome of
4 the outreach conducted under clause
5 (i);

6 “(II) the extent to which the
7 project for which the grant proposal is
8 submitted will contribute to meeting
9 any shortcomings identified under
10 clause (i)(I)(aa) or any maritime edu-
11 cational or career training needs iden-
12 tified under clause (i)(I)(bb); and

13 “(III) the extent to which em-
14 ployers, including small- and medium-
15 sized firms within the community,
16 have demonstrated a commitment to
17 employing workers who would benefit
18 from the project for which the grant
19 proposal is submitted.

20 “(5) CRITERIA FOR AWARD OF GRANTS.—

21 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the appro-
22 priation of funds, the Administrator shall award
23 a grant under this subsection based on—

24 “(i) a determination of the merits of
25 the grant proposal submitted by the eligi-

1 ble institution to develop, offer, or improve
2 maritime educational or career training
3 programs to be made available to workers;

4 “(ii) an evaluation of the likely em-
5 ployment opportunities available to workers
6 who complete a maritime educational or
7 career training program that the eligible
8 institution proposes to develop, offer, or
9 improve;

10 “(iii) an evaluation of prior demand
11 for training programs by workers in the
12 community served by the eligible institu-
13 tion, as well as the availability and capac-
14 ity of existing maritime training programs
15 to meet future demand for training pro-
16 grams;

17 “(iv) any prior designation of an insti-
18 tution as a Center of Excellence for Do-
19 mestic Maritime Workforce Training and
20 Education; and

21 “(v) an evaluation of the previous ex-
22 perience of the eligible institution in pro-
23 viding maritime educational or career
24 training programs.

1 “(B) MATCHING REQUIREMENTS.—A
2 grant awarded under this subsection may not
3 be used to satisfy any private matching require-
4 ment under any other provision of law.

5 “(6) COMPETITIVE AWARDS.—

6 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator
7 shall award grants under this subsection to eli-
8 gible institutions on a competitive basis in ac-
9 cordance with guidelines and requirements es-
10 tablished by the Administrator under paragraph
11 (2)(B).

12 “(B) TIMING OF GRANT NOTICE.—The Ad-
13 ministrator shall post a Notice of Funding Op-
14 portunity regarding grants awarded under this
15 subsection not more than 90 days after the date
16 of enactment of the appropriations Act for the
17 fiscal year concerned.

18 “(C) TIMING OF GRANTS.—The Adminis-
19 trator shall award grants under this subsection
20 not later than 270 days after the date of the
21 enactment of the appropriations Act for the fis-
22 cal year concerned.

23 “(D) APPLICATION OF REQUIREMENTS.—
24 The requirements under subparagraphs (B) and
25 (C) shall not apply until the guidelines required

1 under paragraph (2)(B) have been promul-
2 gated.

3 “(E) REUSE OF UNEXPENDED GRANT
4 FUNDS.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (C),
5 amounts awarded as a grant under this sub-
6 section that are not expended by the grantee
7 shall remain available to the Administrator for
8 use for grants under this subsection.

9 “(F) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—Not more
10 than 3 percent of amounts made available to
11 carry out this subsection may be used for the
12 necessary costs of grant administration.

13 “(7) ELIGIBLE USES OF GRANT FUNDS.—An el-
14 igible institution receiving a grant under this sub-
15 section—

16 “(A) shall carry out activities that are
17 identified as priorities for the purpose of devel-
18 oping, offering, or improving educational or ca-
19 reer training programs for the United States
20 maritime industry workforce;

21 “(B) shall provide training to upgrade the
22 skills of the United States maritime industry
23 workforce, including training to acquire covered
24 requirements as well as technical skills training

1 for jobs in the United States maritime industry;
2 and

3 “(C) may use the grant funds to—

4 “(i) admit additional students to mar-
5 itime training programs;

6 “(ii) expand existing or create new
7 maritime training programs, including
8 through partnerships with 4-year institu-
9 tions of higher education or apprentice-
10 ships with the United States maritime in-
11 dustry;

12 “(iii) create new maritime career
13 pathways;

14 “(iv) expand existing or create new
15 training programs for transitioning mili-
16 tary veterans to careers in the United
17 States maritime industry;

18 “(v) purchase, construct, develop, ex-
19 pand, or improve training facilities, build-
20 ings, and equipment to deliver maritime
21 training programs;

22 “(vi) recruit and train additional fac-
23 ulty to expand the maritime training pro-
24 grams offered by the institution;

1 “(vii) provide financial assistance
2 through scholarships or tuition waivers,
3 not to exceed the applicable tuition ex-
4 penses associated with the covered pro-
5 grams;

6 “(viii) promote the use of distance
7 learning that enables students to take
8 courses through the use of teleconfer-
9 encing, the Internet, and other media tech-
10 nology;

11 “(ix) assist in providing services to
12 address maritime workforce recruitment
13 and training of youth residing in targeted
14 high-poverty areas within empowerment
15 zones and enterprise communities;

16 “(x) implement partnerships with na-
17 tional and regional organizations with spe-
18 cial expertise in developing, organizing,
19 and administering maritime workforce re-
20 cruitment and training services;

21 “(xi) design, develop, and test an
22 array of approaches to providing recruit-
23 ment, training, or retention services, to en-
24 hance diversity, equity, and inclusion in

1 the United States maritime industry work-
2 force;

3 “(xii) in conjunction with employers,
4 organized labor, other groups (such as
5 community coalitions), and Federal, State,
6 or local agencies, design, develop, and test
7 various training approaches in order to de-
8 termine effective practices; or

9 “(xiii) assist in the development and
10 replication of effective service delivery
11 strategies for the United States maritime
12 industry as a whole.

13 “(8) PUBLIC REPORT.—Not later than Decem-
14 ber 15 in each of the calendar years 2023 through
15 2025, the Administrator shall make available on a
16 publicly available website a report and provide a
17 briefing to the Committee on Commerce, Science,
18 and Transportation of the Senate and the Com-
19 mittee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the
20 House of Representatives—

21 “(A) describing each grant awarded under
22 this subsection during the preceding fiscal year;

23 “(B) assessing the impact of each award of
24 a grant under this subsection in a fiscal year

1 preceding the fiscal year referred to in subpara-
2 graph (A) on workers receiving training; and

3 “(C) the performance of the grant awarded
4 with respect to the indicators of performance
5 under section 116(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Workforce
6 Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C.
7 3141(b)(2)(A)(i)).

8 “(9) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—
9 There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out
10 this subsection \$40,000,000 for each of the fiscal
11 years 2022 through 2026.”.

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