

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 579

To require the Secretary of Energy to establish a pilot competitive grant program for the development of a skilled energy workforce, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 28, 2021

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

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Energy to establish a pilot competitive grant program for the development of a skilled energy workforce, 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 Energy
5 Workforce Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds that—

8 (1) the energy sector is the third-largest indus-
9 try in the United States;

1 (2) 1,500,000 new skilled workers will be need-
2 ed in the energy sector over the next 15 years; and

3 (3) a skilled workforce is a critical component
4 of ensuring the growth of the energy sector in the
5 United States.

6 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

8 (1) APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM.—The term
9 “apprenticeship program” means—

10 (A) an apprenticeship program registered
11 with the Department of Labor as of the date of
12 enactment of this Act that has a completion
13 rate for participants of not less than 60 per-
14 cent; or

15 (B) an apprenticeship program not reg-
16 istered with the Department of Labor as of the
17 date of enactment of this Act, but that the Sec-
18 retary determines should be eligible for a grant
19 under section 5.

20 (2) BOARD.—The term “Board” means the Na-
21 tional Center of Excellence for the 21st Century
22 Workforce Advisory Board established under section
23 4(a).

24 (3) COMMUNITY COLLEGE.—The term “commu-
25 nity college” means a junior or community college

1 (as defined in section 312(f) of the Higher Edu-
 2 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1058(f))).

3 (4) PROGRAM.—The term “program” means
 4 the pilot program established under section 5(a).

5 (5) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
 6 the Secretary of Energy.

7 (6) VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION.—The
 8 term “veterans service organization” means an orga-
 9 nization recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Af-
 10 fairs for the representation of veterans under section
 11 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

12 **SEC. 4. NATIONAL CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FOR THE 21ST**
 13 **CENTURY WORKFORCE.**

14 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a
 15 nationwide advisory board, to be known as the “National
 16 Center of Excellence for the 21st Century Workforce Advi-
 17 sory Board”, to foster strategic vision, guidance, and net-
 18 works for the energy industry.

19 (b) REPRESENTATIVES.—The members of the Board
 20 shall consist of energy sector stakeholders, including—

- 21 (1) representatives of relevant industries;
- 22 (2) experts in labor, economics, and workforce
 23 development;
- 24 (3) representatives of States and units of local
 25 government;

1 (4) representatives of elementary and secondary
2 education and postsecondary education; and

3 (5) representatives of labor organizations.

4 (c) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the Board are—

5 (1) to support and develop training and science
6 education programs that—

7 (A) meet the industry and labor needs of
8 the energy sector; and

9 (B) provide opportunities for students to
10 become qualified for placement in traditional
11 and clean energy sector jobs;

12 (2) to align apprenticeship programs and indus-
13 try certifications to further develop succession plan-
14 ning in the energy sector;

15 (3) to integrate educational standards to de-
16 velop foundational skills for elementary and sec-
17 ondary education and postsecondary education to
18 create a pipeline between education and career; and

19 (4) to support the replication of existing model
20 energy curricula.

21 **SEC. 5. ENERGY WORKFORCE PILOT GRANT PROGRAM.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the
23 date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in consulta-
24 tion with the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of
25 Education, shall establish a pilot program to award grants

1 on a competitive basis to eligible entities for job training
2 to obtain an industry-recognized credential.

3 (b) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a grant
4 under this section, an entity shall be a public or nonprofit
5 organization that—

6 (1) includes an advisory board of proportional
7 participation, as determined by the Secretary, of rel-
8 evant organizations, including—

9 (A) relevant energy industry organizations,
10 including public and private employers;

11 (B) labor organizations; and

12 (C) elementary and secondary education
13 and postsecondary education organizations;

14 (2) demonstrates experience in implementing
15 and operating job training and education programs;

16 (3) demonstrates the ability to recruit and sup-
17 port individuals who plan to work in the energy in-
18 dustry in the successful completion of relevant job
19 training and education programs; and

20 (4) provides students who complete the job
21 training and education program with an industry-
22 recognized credential.

23 (c) APPLICATIONS.—Eligible entities desiring a grant
24 under this section shall submit to the Secretary an appli-

1 cation at such time, in such manner, and containing such
2 information as the Secretary may require.

3 (d) PRIORITY.—In selecting eligible entities to receive
4 grants under this section, the Secretary shall prioritize ap-
5 plicants that—

6 (1) house the job training and education pro-
7 grams in—

8 (A) a community college or institution of
9 higher education that includes basic science and
10 math education in the curriculum of the com-
11 munity college, institution of higher education;
12 or

13 (B) an apprenticeship program, and with
14 respect to such apprenticeship programs de-
15 scribed in section 3(1)(B), the Secretary shall
16 further prioritize such programs that can dem-
17 onstrate to the Secretary a completion rate for
18 participants of not less than 60 percent;

19 (2) work with the Secretary of Defense or vet-
20 erans organizations to transition members of the
21 Armed Forces and veterans to careers in the energy
22 sector;

23 (3) apply as a State or regional consortia to le-
24 verage best practices already available in the State

1 or region in which the community college or institu-
2 tion of higher education is located;

3 (4) have a State-supported entity included in
4 the application;

5 (5) include an apprenticeship program as part
6 of the job training and education program;

7 (6) develop a mentorship program for energy
8 professionals and elementary and secondary edu-
9 cation students;

10 (7) provide support services and career coach-
11 ing;

12 (8) provide introductory energy workforce devel-
13 opment training; or

14 (9) provide industry-affiliated pre-apprentice-
15 ship programs, including intensive skill-building pro-
16 grams and intensive short-term programs.

17 (e) ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION.—In making
18 grants under this section, the Secretary shall consider re-
19 gional diversity.

20 (f) LIMITATION ON APPLICATIONS.—An eligible enti-
21 ty may not submit, either individually or as part of a joint
22 application, more than 1 application for a grant under this
23 section during any 1 fiscal year.

1 (g) LIMITATIONS ON AMOUNT OF GRANT.—The
2 amount of a grant for any 1 year shall not exceed
3 \$1,000,000.

4 (h) COSTS.—

5 (1) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Federal share of
6 the cost of a job training and education program
7 carried out using a grant under this section shall be
8 not greater than 65 percent.

9 (2) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—

10 (A) IN GENERAL.—The non-Federal share
11 of the cost of a job training and education pro-
12 gram carried out using a grant under this sec-
13 tion shall consist of not less than 50 percent
14 cash.

15 (B) LIMITATION.—Not greater than 50
16 percent of the non-Federal contribution of the
17 total cost of a job training and education pro-
18 gram carried out using a grant under this sec-
19 tion shall be in the form of in-kind contribu-
20 tions of goods or services fairly valued.

21 (i) REDUCTION OF DUPLICATION.—Prior to submit-
22 ting an application for a grant under this section, each
23 applicant shall consult with the applicable agencies of the
24 Federal Government and coordinate the proposed activi-

1 ties of the applicant with existing State and local pro-
2 grams.

3 (j) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall
4 provide technical assistance and capacity building to na-
5 tional and State energy partnerships, including the enti-
6 ties described in subsection (b)(1), to leverage the existing
7 job training and education programs of the Department
8 of Energy.

9 (k) REPORT.—The Secretary shall submit to Con-
10 gress and make publicly available on the website of the
11 Department of Energy an annual report on the program
12 established under this section, including a description of—

13 (1) the entities receiving grants;

14 (2) the activities carried out using the grants;

15 (3) best practices used to leverage the invest-
16 ment of the Federal Government;

17 (4) the rate of employment for participants
18 after completing a job training and education pro-
19 gram carried out using a grant; and

20 (5) an assessment of the results achieved by the
21 program.

22 (l) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
23 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
24 \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through 2025.

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