

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2021**

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HOUSE BILL 627

Short Title: Be Pro Be Proud NC Pilot Program. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Willis, Saine, Arp, and Winslow (Primary Sponsors).
For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Appropriations, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

April 22, 2021

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR THE BE PRO BE PROUD NORTH CAROLINA
PILOT PROGRAM.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Program Established; Purpose. – From the funds made available to it pursuant to Section 3 of this act, the Department of Labor shall create, implement, operate, and support the Be Pro Be Proud initiative, a three-year mobile statewide workforce development pilot program. The program shall focus on generating student, parent, and educator interest in technical professions within the construction, manufacturing, transportation, and utility industries by emphasizing the high-tech, high-wage potential of these student career paths. The program shall also support progress towards North Carolina's postsecondary attainment goals to increase postsecondary degrees and certificates in the skilled trade professions.

SECTION 2. Components of the Program. – In meeting the goals of the pilot program, Be Pro Be Proud shall provide for at least the following:

- (1) A custom-built mobile workshop that brings elements of up to 12 skilled professions to middle and high school students through simulators and virtual reality experiences. Students on board this state of the art workshop will learn about various careers, job responsibilities, and average statewide wages for each career while stepping virtually into these professions. Students can engage directly with partners and are invited to sign up to learn more about one or more professions of interest.
- (2) Information and data collection for students by setting up a digital profile on Be Pro Be Proud's national "Join the Movement" partnership. With the consent of parents and students participating in the mobile workshops, the data collected shall be shared with the Community Colleges System Office, the Department of Public Instruction, the Department of Commerce, myFutureNC Commission, industry associations, and companies that are prompted to connect with the potential student recruits. The database management system shall provide a connection for student internships, scholarships, apprenticeships, full-time jobs, and other opportunities.
- (3) Follow-up opportunities for interested students to pursue their interests through hands-on leadership opportunities, including gaining on-site learning experiences, volunteering, and participating in networking opportunities with potential job and postsecondary school recruiters.



- 1 (4) Motivation for interested educators to stay engaged through a combination of
2 scholarship opportunities and incentive programs.
- 3 (5) Operation of the pilot program to coincide with the public school instructional
4 calendar and various events for students that take place throughout the
5 summer. A Be Pro Be Proud team shall operate the day-to-day functions of
6 the statewide tour and engage with students. Additional volunteers shall be
7 recruited to assist with the pilot program, including partner associations,
8 companies, and schools, as well as teachers, parents, and students.
- 9 (6) In collaboration with the N.C. Trucking Association, the operation,
10 implementation, and support of a workforce development program to increase
11 licensed commercial driver license operators, transportation dispatchers, and
12 technicians across the State.

13 **SECTION 3.** Appropriation. – There is appropriated from the General Fund to the
14 Department of Labor the sum of five million dollars (\$5,000,000) in nonrecurring funds for the
15 2021-2022 fiscal year to be allocated for the Be Pro Be Proud initiative, a mobile statewide
16 workforce development pilot program, in accordance with the requirements of this act. Any
17 unexpended funds at the end of each fiscal year shall not revert to the General Fund but shall
18 remain available for expenditure for the purposes described by this act until June 30, 2024.

19 **SECTION 4.** Position. – The Department of Labor may establish one time-limited
20 position with the funds appropriated by this act to coordinate and administer the Be Pro Be Proud
21 initiative.

22 **SECTION 5.** Report. – The Department of Labor shall submit a report by April 1 of
23 each year in which it spends State funds appropriated by this act on the Be Pro Be Proud initiative
24 to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic
25 Resources and the Fiscal Research Division regarding the activities undertaken with the funds
26 appropriated by this act.

27 **SECTION 6.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2021.