

1 Introduced by Committee on Commerce and Economic Development

2 Date:

3 Subject: Commerce and trade; workforce development

4 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to adopt
5 miscellaneous provisions relating to workforce development.

6 An act relating to workforce development

7 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

8 * * * Workforce Training;

9 Vermont Training Program; Weatherization * * *

10 Sec. 1. VERMONT TRAINING PROGRAM; WORKFORCE TRAINING
11 ALLOCATIONS

12 (a) In an effort to promote access to training opportunities for Vermont
13 small businesses, and to increase the resources available for employees to
14 obtain credentials of value or apprenticeships, of the amounts appropriated to
15 the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for the Vermont
16 Training Program in fiscal year 2020:

17 (1) the Agency, working in partnership with the Department of Labor to
18 identify appropriate opportunities, shall employ its best efforts to allocate 25
19 percent of Program funding to provide training that results in a credential of
20 value or apprenticeship; and

1 (1) consult with the Commissioner of Labor regarding whether the
2 grantee has accessed, or is eligible to access, other workforce education and
3 training resources;

4 (2) disburse grant funds only for training hours that have been
5 successfully completed by employees; ~~provided that,~~ subject to the following:

6 (A) except for an award under an enhanced incentive for workforce
7 training as provided in 32 V.S.A. § 3336, a grant for on-the-job training shall:

8 (i) for a business with 50 or fewer employees, either provide not
9 more than 75 percent of wages for each employee in training or not more than
10 75 percent of trainer expense, but not both;

11 (ii) for all other businesses, either provide not more than 50
12 percent of wages for each employee in training or not more than 50 percent of
13 trainer expense, but not both, ~~and further provided that ;~~

14 (B) training shall be performed in accordance with a training plan that
15 defines the subject of the training, the number of training hours, and how the
16 effectiveness of the training will be evaluated; and

17 (3) use funds under this section only to supplement training efforts of
18 employers and not to replace or supplant training efforts of employers.

19 * * *

20 (k) Annually on or before January 15, the Secretary shall submit a report to
21 the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the

1 Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

2 In addition to the reporting requirements under section 540 of this title, the
3 report shall identify:

4 (1) all active and completed contracts and grants;

5 (2) from among the following, the category the training addressed:

6 (A) preemployment training or other training for a new employee to
7 begin a newly created position with the employer;

8 (B) preemployment training or other training for a new employee to
9 begin in an existing position with the employer;

10 (C) training for an incumbent employee who, upon completion of
11 training, assumes a newly created position with the employer;

12 (D) training for an incumbent employee who upon completion of
13 training assumes a different position with the employer;

14 (E) training for an incumbent employee to upgrade skills;

15 (3) for the training identified in subdivision (2) of this subsection
16 whether the training is onsite or classroom-based;

17 (4) the number of employees served;

18 (5) the average wage by employer;

19 (6) any waivers granted;

20 (7) the identity of the employer, or, if unknown at the time of the report,
21 the category of employer;

1 (8) the identity of each training provider;

2 (9) whether training results in a wage increase for a trainee, and the
3 amount of increase; ~~and~~

4 (10) the aggregated median wage of employees invoiced for training
5 during the reporting period;

6 (11) the percentage growth in wages for all wage earners in the State
7 during the reporting period; and

8 (12) the number, type, and description of grants for work-based learning
9 programs and activities awarded pursuant to subsection (e) of this section.

10 Sec. 3. WORKFORCE TRAINING; WEATHERIZATION

11 (a) In fiscal year 2020 the amount of \$350,000.00 is appropriated from the
12 General Fund to the Office of Economic Opportunity within the Department of
13 Children and Families, which shall provide grant funding to the five Home
14 Weatherization Assistance Programs for the purpose of recruiting and training
15 individuals in the home weatherization industry.

16 (b) Grantees may use the funding for:

17 (1) recruiting Vermonters who are eligible for funding under the federal
18 Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act;

19 (2) operations for weatherization training programs, including training
20 coordinators across the State; and

21 (3) stipends and wage subsidies for training participants.

1 (c) The Home Weatherization Assistance Programs are also encouraged to
2 apply for the federal Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act grant funds
3 through the Department of Labor to supplement and enhance the
4 weatherization training programs.

5 (d) On or before January 15, 2020, the Departments of Labor and of
6 Children and Families shall report to the House Committee on Commerce and
7 Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic
8 Development, Housing and General Affairs with recommendations on best
9 practices for recruiting, training, and retaining the weatherization workforce in
10 this State.

11 Sec. 4. 16 V.S.A. § 2846 is amended to read:

12 § 2846. ~~NONDEGREE~~ ADVANCEMENT GRANTS

13 (a) The Corporation may establish ~~grant programs~~ an advancement grant
14 program for residents pursuing nondegree education and training opportunities
15 who do not meet the definition of student in subdivision 2822(3) of this title,
16 and who may not meet the requirements of this subchapter.

17 (b) ~~Nondegree grants~~ Advancement grants may be used at institutions that
18 are not approved postsecondary education institutions.

19 (c) The Corporation may adopt rules or establish policies, procedures,
20 standards, and forms for ~~nondegree~~ advancement grants, including the

1 requirements for applying for and using the grants and the eligibility
2 requirements for the institutions where the grants may be used.

3 Sec. 5. 10 V.S.A. § 546 is added to read:

4 § 546. STATE POSTSECONDARY ATTAINMENT GOAL

5 (a) It is the policy of the State of Vermont to:

6 (1) grow awareness of postsecondary pathways and the individual and
7 public value of continued education after high school;

8 (2) expand postsecondary access so that students of all ages and
9 backgrounds can pursue postsecondary education and training;

10 (3) increase postsecondary success by ensuring that Vermonters have
11 the supports they need to complete a credential of value; and

12 (4) maximize partnerships across and within sectors to achieve State
13 workforce development and education goals.

14 (b) In order to meet workforce and labor market demands, the State of
15 Vermont shall take steps necessary to achieve a postsecondary attainment goal
16 that not less than 70 percent of working-age Vermonters possess a credential of
17 value, as defined by the State Workforce Development Board, by the year
18 2025.

19 * * * Adult Career and Technical Education; Study * * *

20 Sec. 6. ADULT CTE STUDY; REPORT

21 (a) Findings; purpose; creation of committee.

1 (1) Findings. The General Assembly finds:

2 (A) Like many rural states, Vermont faces demographic realities
3 that have resulted in an historically low unemployment rate and created
4 obstacles for employers that seek to hire and retain enough fully-trained
5 employees.

6 (B) Notwithstanding this high employer demand, due to rapidly
7 changing technology and evolving business needs, potential employees may
8 lack the particular skills and training necessary to qualify for available jobs.

9 (C) In order to assist employers and employees in matching demand
10 to requisite skills, Vermont has a broad diversity of adult workforce
11 education and training programs offered by multiple providers, including
12 programs administered or funded by State government, educational
13 institutions, business and industry, and private professionals.

14 (2) Purpose. Consistent with the goals and purposes of H.919 (2018),
15 pursuant to which the State Workforce Development Board and other
16 stakeholders are currently engaged in planning the design and
17 implementation of a fully-integrated workforce development system, it is the
18 purpose of the General Assembly to explore the creation of a fully-integrated
19 adult career and technical education system that:

1 (A) provides Vermonters throughout the State with high quality
2 programs that are standardized, replicable, and offered with regularity and
3 consistency;

4 (B) coordinates, or integrates where appropriate, the many
5 programs and providers to maximize the efficient use of training resources;
6 and

7 (C) features a governance structure that provides consistency across
8 the system whenever appropriate, but also provides the flexibility necessary
9 to respond to local and regional workforce demands.

10 (3) Creation. There is created an Adult Career and Technical
11 Education Study Committee to consider and report to the General Assembly
12 on the design, implementation, and costs of an integrated adult career and
13 technical education system that achieves the results specified in subdivision
14 (2) of this subsection.

15 (b) Membership. The Committee shall be composed of the following
16 members:

17 (1) one current member of the House of Representatives appointed by
18 the Speaker of the House;

19 (2) one current member of the Senate appointed by the Committee on
20 Committees;

21 (3) the Chancellor of the Vermont State Colleges, or designee;

1 (4) the Commissioner of Labor, or designee;

2 (5) the Chair of the State Workforce Development Board, or designee;

3 and

4 (6) an employer who is a member of the State Workforce Development
5 Board, appointed by the Board chair;

6 (7) two members appointed by the Vermont Adult Technical
7 Education Association, each of whom is a director of an adult career and
8 technical education center; and

9 (8) the President of the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation, or
10 designee.

11 (c) Assistance.

12 (1) The Committee shall have the administrative, legal, and fiscal
13 assistance of the Office of Legislative Council and the Joint Fiscal Office.

14 (2) The Committee may request additional support for subject matter
15 and technical expertise from executive branch agencies and departments as is
16 necessary to complete its work.

17 (d) Report. On or before January 15, 2020 the Committee shall submit a
18 its findings and any recommendations for legislative action to the House
19 Committee on Commerce and Economic Development, and the Senate
20 Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

21 (e) Meetings.

1 (1) The Office of Legislative Council shall coordinate with the Chair
2 to call the first meeting of the Committee to occur on or before August 15,
3 2019.

4 (2) The first member appointed from the General Assembly shall be
5 the chair.

6 (3) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

7 (4) The Committee shall cease to exist on January 15, 2020.

8 (f) Compensation and reimbursement.

9 (1) For attendance at meetings during adjournment of the General
10 Assembly, a legislative member of the Committee serving in his or her
11 capacity as a legislator shall be entitled to per diem compensation and
12 reimbursement of expenses pursuant to 2 V.S.A. § 406 for not more than
13 eight meetings. These payments shall be made from monies appropriated to
14 the General Assembly.

15 (2) Other members of the Committee shall be entitled to per diem
16 compensation and reimbursement of expenses as permitted under 32 V.S.A.
17 § 1010 for not more than eight meetings. These payments shall be made
18 from monies appropriated to the General Assembly.

19 * * * Workforce Recruitment; Military Base Recruitment * * *

20 Sec. 7. RELOCATION SUPPORT SYSTEM

1 (a)(1) In order for Vermonters to support themselves and their families,
2 enable Vermont businesses to grow, and expand our communities' tax base,
3 the Department of Labor shall award grants on a competitive basis to three
4 organizations with local expertise and a demonstrated ability to directly
5 support a coordinated, high-touch approach to connecting individuals and
6 families to employment by working with employers and service organizations.

7 (2)(A) A grantee shall use its award to facilitate and expedite the
8 transition of individuals into the Vermont workforce by providing quick,
9 customized information, resources, referrals, and support.

10 (B) The Department shall coordinate monitoring, information,
11 tracking, and support systems to facilitate the successful connection of these
12 individuals to Vermont employment.

13 (3) The Department shall:

14 (A) support grantees by facilitating the development of clear
15 outcomes and accountability frameworks for each community; and

16 (B) share accountability data with partners across the State in a
17 community of practice so that innovations, challenges, and best practices can
18 be leveraged towards the development of a comprehensive Statewide path
19 towards full employment.

20 (b) State agencies and State-funded programs shall coordinate with the
21 Department to ensure that services and information that could assist a person in

1 relocating to Vermont are made available through an integrated, employee-
2 centered system.

3 (c) The Department shall:

4 (1) collaborate with key employers and nongovernmental organizations
5 to ensure that appropriate expertise is available to program staff and
6 individuals looking to enter Vermont’s job market, through referrals or other
7 information sharing mechanisms;

8 (2)(A) coordinate available information for each region that includes
9 labor market information, housing and education information, recreation
10 information, and other relevant resources; and

11 (B) make the information easily accessible for interested individuals
12 to assist in aspects of preliminary decision making; and

13 (3) convene regional, multidisciplinary teams that:

14 (A) comprise partners with expertise from relevant sectors, including
15 housing, transportation, education, health, child care, recreation, and economic
16 development; and

17 (B) provide community-level knowledge, support, and services to
18 best meet the needs of prospective employees.

19 **Sec. 8. ON-BASE RECRUITMENT PILOT PROGRAM**

20 (a) The Department of Labor shall work with the Vermont National Guard
21 and public and private employers in health care, construction, manufacturing,

1 business services, transportation, and human services to pilot an on-base
2 recruitment effort that encourages service members separating from military
3 service to relocate to Vermont.

4 (b) The Department shall coordinate with the Agency of Commerce and
5 Community Development to direct available marketing and outreach funds to
6 support targeted recruitment events held on military bases.

7 (c) The Department shall provide limited organizational support to
8 employers interested in participating in private-pay travel to military bases in
9 conjunction with other employers, representatives of the Vermont National
10 Guard, and State officials, for the purpose of promoting employment and
11 relocation to Vermont.

12 (d) Not more than \$25,000 in General Funds may be allocated to the
13 Department to support staff time, supplies, necessary travel, and other related
14 costs.

15 * * * Workforce Training and Credentialing; Nurse Educators;

16 New Americans; Workers with Barriers to Employment * * *

17 Sec. 9. OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL REGULATION; REPORT

18 (a) The Office of Professional Regulation, in consultation with the
19 Vermont Board of Nursing, Vermont State Colleges, the University of
20 Vermont, Norwich University, and other interested stakeholders, shall review
21 statutory, regulatory, and accreditation standards for nursing programs within

1 the State and nationally with the purpose of identifying barriers to recruitment
2 and retention of nurse educators in nursing education programs.

3 (b) The Office of Professional Regulation shall evaluate the
4 appropriateness of the level of credential and experience currently required for
5 nurse educators in clinical settings.

6 (c) On or before December 15, 2019, the Office of Professional Regulation
7 shall report its findings, including recommendations for any statutory or
8 regulatory changes to facilitate recruitment and retention of nurse faculty, to
9 the House Committees on Commerce and Economic Development and on
10 Government Operations and to the Senate Committees on Economic
11 Development, Housing and General Affairs and on Government Operations.

12 Sec. 10. STUDY; WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR
13 REFUGEES, IMMIGRANTS, AND ASYLYM SEEKERS

14 (a) Creation. There is created a task force on workforce development
15 opportunities for refugees, immigrants, and asylum seekers living in Vermont.

16 (b) Membership. The task force shall be composed of the following
17 members:

18 (1) The State Refugee Coordinator.

19 (2) A member appointed by the Agency of Human Services Secretary,
20 with expertise in new American workforce development issues.

21 (3) The executive director of AALV, or designee.

1 (4) The president of Vermont’s U.S. Committee for Refugees and
2 Immigrants, or designee.

3 (5) The director of CVOEO’s financial futures program, or designee.

4 (6) A representative of Burlington’s Community and Economic
5 Development Office’s Sustainability, Housing, and Economic Development
6 department.

7 (7) Two Vermont employers with experience hiring and cultivating new
8 American workers appointed by the Chair of the State Workforce
9 Development Board, one of whom is engaged in business in the agricultural
10 sector and one of whom is engaged in business in another sector.

11 (8) Two members of Vermont’s refugee, immigrant, and immigrant
12 communities, one appointed by each of AALV and Vermont’s U.S. Committee
13 for Refugees and Immigrants.

14 (9) An appointee of the University of Vermont with research expertise
15 in refugee and New American migration in Vermont.

16 (10) A member appointed by the Vermont Migrant Education Project.

17 (11) A member appointed by the Community Asylum Seekers Project.

18 (12) A member appointed by Rutland Welcomes.

19 (c) Powers and duties. The task force shall study the following:

20 (1) recommendations identified in relevant studies and reports;

- 1 (2) cultural competency support needed in Vermont’s employment
2 settings;
3 (3) training, apprenticeship, and mentorship needs and opportunities;
4 (4) tools and supports needed for refugees to effectively apply pre-
5 existing educational and professional credentials in Vermont settings; and
6 (5) additional supports needed to ensure employment opportunities,
7 including child care and transportation.

8 (d) Report. On or before December 1, 2019, the task force shall report to
9 the House Committees on Commerce and Economic Development, on
10 Government Operations, and on Appropriations, and to the Senate Committees
11 on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs, on Government
12 Operations, and on Appropriations concerning its findings, recommendations
13 for proposed legislation, and investments in order of priority.

14 Sec. 11. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR; FIDELITY BONDS

15 Of the amounts appropriated to the Department of Labor in fiscal year 2020
16 from the Workforce Education and Training Fund, the Department shall
17 allocate not less than \$3,000.00 to purchase fidelity bonds through the Federal
18 Bonding Program to provide insurance against theft or loss for insurers to hire
19 workers with barriers to employment.

1 Sec. 12. REGISTRY OF EMPLOYERS

2 The Department of Labor shall create and maintain on its website a registry
3 of employers who accept applications and are willing to hire workers with
4 barriers to employment, including workers in recovery from addiction and
5 workers with past incarceration.

6 * * * Vermont Talent Pipeline Management Project * * *

7 Sec. 13. VERMONT TALENT PIPELINE MANAGEMENT PROJECT

8 The Vermont Talent Pipeline Management Project brings value to
9 Vermont’s workforce and economic development initiatives by:

10 (1) convening employers by sector to create industry specific
11 partnerships and employer informed initiatives aimed at addressing skill gaps;

12 (2) engaging education partners to develop and align programs that meet
13 employer and incumbent needs; and

14 (3) highlighting policy, practice, and funding challenges that prevent
15 access to training or that inhibit advancement of workers within high need
16 areas of Vermont’s economy.

17 (b) The Vermont Talent Pipeline Management Project is encouraged to
18 collaborate in Vermont’s workforce and economic development systems by:

19 (1) organizing, convening and maintaining employer collaboratives in
20 key sectors of the economy, identified by available labor market information;

1 (2) \$10,000.00 to the General Assembly for per diem compensation and
2 reimbursement of expenses for study committees, as follows:

3 (A) \$5,000 for members of the Adult CTE Study Committee created
4 in Sec.6 of this act; and

5 (B) \$5,000 for members of the Task Force on Workforce
6 Development Opportunities for Refugees, Immigrants, and Asylum Seekers
7 created in Sec. 10 of this act.

8 (3) \$1,475,000 to the Department of Labor as follows:

9 (A) \$425,000 to the Department of Labor to implement a relocation
10 support system and provide services pursuant to Sec. 7 of this act;

11 (B) \$50,000 for a grant to the Community College of Vermont to
12 provide robotics training at its Rutland location; and

13 (C) \$1,000,000 to expand opportunities for apprenticeships, training,
14 and adult career and technical education, which may include funding to
15 replicate in additional locations the robotics training program at the Rutland
16 location of the Community College of Vermont.

17 * * * Effective Date * * *

18 Sec. 15. EFFECTIVE DATE

19 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2019, except that Sec. 6 (Adult CTE
20 Study Committee) shall take effect on passage.