

Introduced by Senator Ashe

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Commerce and trade; workforce development

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to support New Americans in the Vermont workforce.

An act relating to supporting New Americans in the Vermont workforce

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

Sec. 1. SUPPORTING NEW AMERICANS IN THE WORKFORCE

(a) The State of Vermont shall take steps necessary to provide support to New Americans in the Vermont workforce and their employers as follows:

(1) The Department of Labor shall simplify the process and reduce barriers for employers seeking to access Department funding for English language classes for their employees.

(2) The Department of Labor shall work with USCRI Vermont to increase employers' awareness of free services available through USCRI Vermont, including on-site English language classes.

(3) The Department of Labor shall develop and make available to employers a collection of best practices for addressing the unique language, transportation, cultural, and other challenges New Americans face in the workforce.

(4) The Department of Labor, in collaboration with the Community College of Vermont or other partners, shall explore the development of a work readiness certificate or program for New American employees.

(5) The Department of Labor, in collaboration with employer organizations, shall explore the development of a “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity” certificate or program, or similar initiative, for employers seeking to establish a New American-friendly workplace.

(6) The Department of Labor, in collaboration with the Department of Human Resources, shall explore measures to ensure that the State’s Employee Assistance Program offers services and support that is responsive to the particular pressures and challenges facing New Americans. The Departments shall share best practices with any similar employee assistance programs operating in Vermont.

(7) The Agency of Commerce and Community Development shall explore whether State marketing funds should be targeted to New Americans in

other states to inform them of Vermont’s inclusive workplace practices and employment opportunities.

(b) The State entities named in subsection (a) of this section shall report to the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing, and General Affairs and the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development concerning the implementation of this section on or before January 15, 2020.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect on passage.