

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 recognized credentials of value, of the amounts appropriated to the
15 Agency of Commerce and Community Development for the Vermont Training
16 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 an industry-
20 recognized credential; 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 who completed training
5 during the reporting period; and

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

8 Sec. 3. WORKFORCE TRAINING; WEATHERIZATION

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

14 (b) Grantees may use the funding for:

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

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

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

20 (c) The Home Weatherization Assistance Programs are also encouraged to
21 apply for the federal Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act grant funds

1 through the Department of Labor to supplement and enhance the
2 weatherization training programs.

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

9 **Sec. 4. VERMONT TALENT PIPELINE MANAGEMENT PROJECT**

10 *The Vermont Talent Pipeline Management Project brings value to*
11 *Vermont's workforce and economic development initiatives by:*

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

14 *(2) engaging post-secondary training and education partners to develop*
15 *or streamline programs that meet employer and incumbent needs; and*

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

19 *(b) The Vermont Talent Pipeline Management Project shall have the*
20 *limited role in the post-secondary workforce and economic development*
21 *systems of:*

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

3 (2) broadly sharing competency and credential requirements learned
4 from employer collaboratives, and specifically engaging post-secondary
5 training and post-secondary education partners in the development of new or
6 modification of existing programs; and

7 (3) using a continuous improvement process to ensure employer needs
8 are met.

9 Sec. 5. 16 V.S.A. § 2846 is amended to read:

10 § 2846. ~~NONDEGREE~~ ADVANCEMENT GRANTS

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

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

17 (c) The Corporation may adopt rules or establish policies, procedures,
18 standards, and forms for ~~nondegree~~ advancement grants, including the
19 requirements for applying for and using the grants and the eligibility
20 requirements for the institutions where the grants may be used.

21 Sec. 6. 10 V.S.A. § 546 is added to read:

1 § 546. STATE POSTSECONDARY ATTAINMENT GOAL

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

17 Sec. 7. ADULT CTE STUDY; REPORT

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

19 (1) Findings. The General Assembly finds:

20 (A) Like many rural states, Vermont faces demographic realities
21 that have resulted in an historically low unemployment rate and created

1 obstacles for employers that seek to hire and retain enough fully-trained
2 employees.

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

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

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

17 (A) provides Vermonters throughout the State with high quality
18 programs that are standardized, replicable, and offered with regularity and
19 consistency;

1 (B) coordinates, or integrates where appropriate, the many
2 programs and providers to maximize the efficient use of training resources;
3 and

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

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

12 (b) Membership. The Committee shall be composed of the following
13 members:

14 (1) one current member of the House of Representatives appointed by
15 the Speaker of the House;

16 (2) one current member of the Senate appointed by the Committee on
17 Committees;

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

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

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

21 and

1 (6) an employer who is a member of the State Workforce Development

2 Board, appointed by the Board chair;

3 (7) two members appointed by the Vermont Adult Technical

4 Education Association, each of whom is a director of an adult career and

5 technical education center; and

6 (8) the President of the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation, or

7 designee.

8 (c) Assistance.

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

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

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

18 (e) Meetings.

19 (1) The Office of Legislative Council shall coordinate with the Chair
20 to call the first meeting of the Committee to occur on or before August 15,
21 2019.

1 organizations with local expertise and a demonstrated ability to directly
2 support a coordinated, high-touch approach to connecting individuals and
3 families to employment by working with employers and service **organizations.**

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

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

10 (3) The Department shall:

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

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

17 **(b)** State agencies and State-funded programs shall coordinate with the
18 Department to ensure that services and information that could assist a person in
19 relocating to Vermont are made available through an integrated, employee-
20 centered system.

21 **(c)** The Department shall:

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

5 (2)(A) coordinate available information for each region that includes
6 labor market information, housing and education information, recreation
7 information, and other relevant resources; and

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

10 (3) convene regional, multidisciplinary teams that:

11 (A) comprise partners with expertise from relevant sectors, including
12 housing, transportation, education, health, child care, recreation, and economic
13 development; and

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

16 Sec. 9. ON-BASE RECRUITMENT PILOT PROGRAM

17 (a) The Department of Labor shall work with the Vermont National Guard
18 and public and private employers in health care, construction, manufacturing,
19 business services, transportation, and human services to pilot an on-base
20 recruitment effort that encourages service members separating from military
21 service to relocate to Vermont.

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

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

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

12 * * * Workforce Training and Credentialing;

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

14 Sec. 10. OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL REGULATION; REPORT

15 On or before December 15, 2020, the Office of Professional Regulation, in
16 consultation with the Vermont Board of Nursing, shall assess the feasibility of
17 designing and implementing a basic teaching certification program for nurse
18 educators and report its findings to the House Committees on Commerce and
19 Economic Development and on Government Operations and to the Senate
20 Committees on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs and on
21 Government Operations.

1 Sec. 11. STUDY; WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR
2 REFUGEES, IMMIGRANTS, AND ASYLYM SEEKERS

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

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

7 (1) The State Refugee Coordinator.

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

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

11 (4) The president of Vermont's U.S. Committee for Refugees and
12 Immigrants, or designee.

13 (5) The director of CVOEO's financial futures program, or designee.

14 (6) A representative of Burlington's Community and Economic
15 Development Office's Sustainability, Housing, and Economic Development
16 department.

17 (7) Two Vermont employers with experience hiring and cultivating new
18 American workers appointed by the Chair of the State Workforce
19 Development Board, one of whom is engaged an agriculture business and one
20 who is engaged in business in another sector.

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

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

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

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

8 (12) A member appointed by Rutland Welcomes.

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

10 (1) recommendations identified in relevant studies and reports identified
11 by the task force membership and witnesses;

12 (2) cultural competency support needed in Vermont’s employment
13 settings;

14 (3) training, apprenticeship, and mentorship needs and opportunities;

15 (4) tools and supports needed for refugees to effectively apply pre-
16 existing educational and professional credentials in Vermont settings; and

17 (5) additional supports needed to ensure employment opportunities,
18 including child care and transportation.

19 (d) Report. On or before December 1, 2019, the task force shall report to
20 the House Committees on Commerce and Economic Development, on
21 Government Operations, and on Appropriations, and to the Senate Committees

1 on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs, on Government
2 Operations, and on Appropriations concerning its findings, recommendations
3 for proposed legislation, and investments in order of priority.

4 Sec. 12. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR; FIDELITY BONDS

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

10 Sec. 13. REGISTRY OF EMPLOYERS

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

15 * * * Appropriations * * *

16 Sec. 14. APPROPRIATIONS

17 In fiscal year 2020 the amount of \$1,985,000.00 is appropriated from the
18 General Fund to the following recipients for the purposes specified:

19 (1) \$250,000 to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development
20 for economic development marketing pursuant to its authority in 3 V.S.A.
21 § 2476(c) to execute the State's core Economic Development Marketing Plan

1 through paid, owned, and earned media, utilizing technology, data, and
2 analysis tools;

3 (2) \$250,000 to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development
4 to identify, recruit, and provide relocation assistance to workers, including:

5 (A) identifying target audiences;

6 (B) targeting through digital and social media; and

7 (C) implementing strategies that convert visitors to residents and
8 awarding grants for regional partnerships to help recruitment efforts at the
9 local and regional levels;

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

12 (A) \$5,000 for members of the Adult CTE Study Committee created
13 in Sec.7 of this act; and

14 (B) \$5,000 for members of the Task Force on Workforce
15 Development Opportunities for Refugees, Immigrants, and Asylum Seekers
16 created in Sec. 11 of this act.

17 (3) \$1,475,000 to the Department of Labor as follows:

18 (A) \$425,000 to the Department of Labor to implement a relocation
19 support system and provide services pursuant to Sec. 8 of this act;

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

