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**HOUSE BILL 1949**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Stambaugh, Tarleton, Kraft, and Ormsby

AN ACT Relating to creating the skilled worker outreach, recruitment, and key training program; and adding a new chapter to Title 28C RCW.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Department" means the department of commerce.

(2) "Eligible applicant" means any government or nongovernment entity or organization that offers, or plans to offer, a skilled worker training program and that has partnered with industry to offer or fund a skilled worker training program.

(3) "Grant program" means the skilled worker outreach, recruitment, and key training program.

(4) "Grant review committee" means the skilled worker outreach, recruitment, and key training program review committee as created in section 5 of this act.

(5) "Matching grant" means a grant funded by the state to match funding provided by an eligible applicant to support efforts to increase the state's skilled workforce.

(6) "Skilled worker training program" means an accredited educational, occupational education, apprenticeship, or similar training program that:

(a) Trains or retrains individuals to perform a skill that is needed in the workforce;

(b) Awards an industry or state recognized certificate, credential, associate degree, professional license, or similar evidence of achievement upon completion of the program; and

(c) Does not include an educational program that awards a bachelor's or higher degree upon completion of the program.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Subject to availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the skilled worker outreach, recruitment, and key training program is created. The purpose of the grant program is to increase the state's skilled workforce by awarding matching grants to eligible applicants to:

(1) Engage in outreach and recruiting efforts to increase enrollment in and completion of skilled worker training programs and, by partnering with business and industry, to determine current, future, and critical workforce needs; and

(2) Provide skilled worker training.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The department shall administer the grant program and establish a process for accepting grant applications, including application guidelines and deadlines.

(2) By January 1, 2018, and annually no later than January 1st thereafter, the department shall start accepting grant applications.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) To be considered for a matching grant, an eligible applicant with an existing skilled worker training program or that is planning to offer a skilled worker training program must include, at a minimum, the following information in its application:

(a) A description of how the matching grant will be used to recruit participants to and provide an outreach plan for its existing or proposed skilled worker training program;

(b) A description of the skilled worker training program it plans to offer or offers, including the location of the program, the particular skills taught, and if an existing program, the number of years it has been in operation;

(c) Past, current, and projected enrollment in the skilled worker training program, and if an existing program, the estimated increases in enrollment;

(d) If an existing skilled worker training program, a comparison of the number of participants who enroll in the program and the number of participants who complete the program over a five-year period, if available;

(e) Specific industry needs or gaps in the workforce that the planned or existing skilled worker training program will or does address;

(f) A description of intended or existing partnerships with industry members, including those where program participants will have the opportunity to earn income or credit hours;

(g) Costs or the anticipated costs to operate the skilled worker training program;

(h) Resources that the eligible applicant will commit in matching dollars if a matching grant is awarded, and if the skilled worker training program already exists, existing resources that the eligible applicant has invested in recruiting, outreach, and funding of its skilled worker training program; and

(i) Any other information the department requires.

(2) Upon receipt of an application that satisfies the requirements in this section, the department must send the application to the grant review committee for its consideration.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The department must establish a grant review committee to review grant applications and make recommendations on who should receive a matching grant and the amount. The grant review committee must consist of twelve members with representatives from the following:

(a) The department of labor and industries;

(b) The department of employment security;

(c) The department of enterprise services;

(d) The Washington economic development association;

(e) The workforce training and education coordinating board;

(f) The state board for community and technical colleges;

(g) Two representatives from business;

(h) Two representatives from labor; and

(i) Two representatives from the Washington apprenticeship and training council.

(2) The grant review committee shall designate a chair to oversee the committee's meetings.

(3) The grant review committee shall establish criteria for ranking eligible applicants for matching grant awards. The grant review committee shall consider and rank eligible applicants based on which have the best potential to:

(a) Reach a broad audience through their recruitment and outreach efforts;

(b) Significantly increase enrollment and completion of their skilled worker training program;

(c) Fill existing needs for skilled workers in the market;

(d) Have demonstrated the following, prioritized in the following order:

(i)(A) That the eligible applicant will provide monetary contributions from its own resources; or

(B) That the eligible applicant has contributed its own resources in the form of monetary or in-kind matching contributions; and

(ii)(A) That the eligible applicant has secured an industry partner; or

(B) That the eligible applicant has secured from an industry partner a monetary or in-kind contribution, conditional job placement guarantees, or that the industry partner has contributed other meaningful investment in skilled worker training programs.

(4) The grant review committee shall submit its recommendations to the director of the department, who shall determine to whom and in what amounts to award matching grants. Matching grants must be awarded no later than April 1st each year following the application submittal deadline.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Grant recipients shall not use matching grants for tuition subsidies or to reduce tuition for a skilled worker training program.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) Each eligible applicant that receives a matching grant shall submit a report, or if the matching grant extends over a year, an annual report to the grant review committee on the outcomes achieved. The grant recipient shall include in the report at least the following measurable outcomes:

(a) The manner in which the grant recipient has used the matching grant to provide outreach and recruit participants in its skilled worker training program;

(b) The number of participants enrolled in and the number of participants who completed the skilled worker training program, both before the matching grant was awarded and since the matching grant was received;

(c) The number of skilled worker training participants who obtained employment in an industry for which the participant was trained under the program, including information about the industry in which the participants are employed;

(d) The number of participants recruited; and

(e) Any other information the grant review committee determines appropriate.

(2) By December 1, 2019, and by each December 1st thereafter, the grant review committee shall submit an annual report to the governor and appropriate committees of the legislature in accordance with the reporting requirements in RCW 43.01.036. The report must include:

(a) The number of matching grants awarded in the prior year, including the amount, recipient, and duration of each matching grant;

(b) The number of individuals who enrolled in and completed a skilled worker training program offered by each grant recipient;

(c) The number of individuals who obtained employment in a position that uses the skills for which they were trained through a skilled worker training program offered by a grant recipient; and

(d) Other information obtained from grant recipients' reports under subsection (1) of this section.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  To assist with implementation of the grant program, the department, in coordination with the workforce training and education coordinating board, shall assess current and future workforce needs and coordinate skilled worker training and education programs throughout the state. The coordination must include:

(1) Identifying current, future, and critical workforce needs;

(2) Partnering with industry associations and businesses to assess and determine their workforce needs; and

(3) Coordinating with skilled worker training program providers on skill sets being developed and the quality of applicants being trained.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The skilled worker outreach, recruitment, and key training program account is created in the custody of the state treasurer. The department shall deposit in the account all money received for the program. The account shall be self-sustaining and consist of funds appropriated by the legislature for the skilled worker outreach, recruitment, and key training program and private contributions to the program. Expenditures from the account shall only be used for matching grants provided to grant recipients. Only the director of the department or the director's designee may authorize expenditures from the account. The account is subject to the allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW, but an appropriation is not required for expenditures.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Sections 1 through 9 of this act constitute a new chapter in Title 28C RCW.

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