
SENATE BILL 5254

State of Washington

60th Legislature

2007 Regular Session

By Senators Kilmer, Kastama, Fairley, Rockefeller, Kauffman, Marr, Hatfield, Weinstein, Keiser, Sheldon, McAuliffe, Eide, Kohl-Welles, Shin, Murray, Tom, Regala, Spanel and Kline

Read first time 01/15/2007. Referred to Committee on Higher Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to industry skill panels; amending RCW 28C.18.010;
2 adding new sections to chapter 28C.18 RCW; creating a new section; and
3 making appropriations.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that a skilled
6 work force is essential for employers and job seekers to compete in
7 today's global economy. The engines of economic progress are fueled by
8 education and training. The legislature further finds that industry
9 skill panels are a critical and proven form of public-private
10 partnership that harness the expertise of leaders in business, labor,
11 and education to identify work force development strategies for
12 industries that drive Washington's regional economies. Industry skill
13 panels foster innovation and enable industry leaders and public
14 partners to be proactive, addressing changing needs for businesses
15 quickly and strategically. Industry skill panels leverage small state
16 investments with private sector investments to ensure that public
17 resources are better aligned with industry needs.

18 (2) The legislature further finds that industry skill panels
19 support other valuable initiatives such as the department of community,

1 trade, and economic development's cluster-based economic development
2 grants; the community and technical college centers of excellence,
3 high-demand funds, and the job skills program; and the employment
4 security department's incumbent worker training funds. Industry skill
5 panels provide a framework for coordinating these and other investments
6 in line with economic and work force development strategies identified
7 by industry leaders. It is the intent of the legislature to support
8 the development and maintenance of industry skill panels in key sectors
9 of the economy as an efficient and effective way to support regional
10 economic development.

11 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28C.18.010 and 1996 c 99 s 2 are each amended to read
12 as follows:

13 Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions in
14 this section apply throughout this title.

15 (1) "Board" means the work force training and education
16 coordinating board.

17 (2) "Director" means the director of the work force training and
18 education coordinating board.

19 (3) "Training system" means programs and courses of secondary
20 vocational education, technical college programs and courses, community
21 college vocational programs and courses, private career school and
22 college programs and courses, employer-sponsored training, adult basic
23 education programs and courses, programs and courses funded by the
24 (~~job training partnership~~) federal workforce investment act, programs
25 and courses funded by the federal vocational act, programs and courses
26 funded under the federal adult education act, publicly funded programs
27 and courses for adult literacy education, and apprenticeships, and
28 programs and courses offered by private and public nonprofit
29 organizations that are representative of communities or significant
30 segments of communities and provide job training or adult literacy
31 services.

32 (4) "Work force skills" means skills developed through applied
33 learning that strengthen and reinforce an individual's academic
34 knowledge, critical thinking, problem solving, and work ethic and,
35 thereby, develop the employability, occupational skills, and management
36 of home and work responsibilities necessary for economic independence.

1 (5) "Vocational education" means organized educational programs
2 offering a sequence of courses which are directly related to the
3 preparation or retraining of individuals in paid or unpaid employment
4 in current or emerging occupations requiring other than a baccalaureate
5 or advanced degree. Such programs shall include competency-based
6 applied learning which contributes to an individual's academic
7 knowledge, higher-order reasoning, and problem-solving skills, work
8 attitudes, general employability skills, and the occupational-specific
9 skills necessary for economic independence as a productive and
10 contributing member of society. Such term also includes applied
11 technology education.

12 (6) "Adult basic education" means instruction designed to achieve
13 mastery of skills in reading, writing, oral communication, and
14 computation at a level sufficient to allow the individual to function
15 effectively as a parent, worker, and citizen in the United States,
16 commensurate with that individual's actual ability level, and includes
17 English as a second language and preparation and testing service for
18 the general education development exam.

19 (7) "Industry skill panel" means a regional partnership of
20 business, labor, and education leaders that identifies skill gaps in a
21 key economic cluster and enables the industry and public partners to
22 respond to and be proactive in addressing workforce skill needs.

23 NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. A new section is added to chapter 28C.18 RCW
24 to read as follows:

25 (1) Subject to funding provided for the purposes of this section,
26 the board, in consultation with the state board for community and
27 technical colleges, the department of community, trade, and economic
28 development, and the employment security department, shall allocate
29 grants on a competitive basis to establish and support industry skill
30 panels.

31 (2) Eligible applicants for the grants allocated under this section
32 include, but are not limited to, work force development councils,
33 community and technical colleges, economic development councils,
34 private career schools, chambers of commerce, trade associations, and
35 apprenticeship councils.

36 (3) Entities applying for a grant under this section shall provide

1 an employer match of at least twenty-five percent to be eligible. The
2 local match may include in-kind services.

3 (4) It shall be the role of industry skill panels funded under this
4 chapter to enable businesses in the industry to address work force
5 skill needs. Industry skill panels shall identify work force
6 strategies to meet the needs in order to benefit employers and workers
7 across the industry. Examples of strategies include, but are not
8 limited to: Developing career guidance materials; producing or
9 updating skill standards and curricula; designing training programs and
10 courses; developing technical assessments and certifications; arranging
11 employer mentoring, tutoring, and internships; identifying private
12 sector assistance in providing faculty or equipment to training
13 providers; and organizing industry conferences disseminating best
14 practices. The products and services of particular skill panels shall
15 depend upon the needs of the industry.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28C.18 RCW
17 to read as follows:

18 The board shall establish industry skill panel standards that
19 identify the expectations for industry skill panel products and
20 services. The board shall establish the standards in consultation with
21 labor, the state board for community and technical colleges, the
22 employment security department, the institute of workforce development
23 and economic sustainability, and the department of community, trade,
24 and economic development. Continued funding of particular industry
25 skill panels shall be based on meeting the standards established by the
26 board under this section. Beginning December 1, 2008, the board shall
27 report annually to the governor and the economic development and higher
28 education committees of the legislature on the results of the industry
29 skill panels funded under this chapter in meeting the standards.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** (1) The sum of one million dollars, or as
31 much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year
32 ending June 30, 2008, from the general fund to the work force training
33 and education coordinating board for the purposes of this act.

34 (2) The sum of one million dollars, or as much thereof as may be
35 necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009,
36 from the general fund to the work force training and education

1 coordinating board for the purposes of this act. The board shall use
2 up to fifty thousand dollars of the appropriation for the fiscal year
3 ending June 30, 2009, for an independent evaluation of the
4 effectiveness of industry skill panels.

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