AN ACT Relating to the sustainability and expansion of state registered apprenticeship programs; amending RCW 49.04.050; adding new sections to chapter 49.04 RCW; creating new sections; and providing expiration dates.

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

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. Washington state has maintained a robust registered apprenticeship system that has created tens of thousands of high-skill, high-wage careers in traditional apprenticeship programs that are financially stable and jointly managed to ensure future generations of apprentices for high demand occupations. The earn while you learn apprenticeship model opens opportunities to diverse groups and communities that have not been able to access traditional higher education and traditional apprenticeship programs in the past. The COVID-19 pandemic has also created a significant dislocation and disruption of our workforce that can be repaired in part by reconnecting workers with innovative apprenticeships that lead to new career pathways. To achieve the goals of rebuilding a robust postpandemic workforce and undertaking active efforts to provide equity, diversity, and inclusion in apprenticeship programs will take sustained effort and support.
NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. A new section is added to chapter 49.04 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The apprenticeship council must establish economic or industry sector-based subcommittees to promote collaboration within each subcommittee's respective industry and to periodically review the required competencies and curricula for apprenticeship programs in each subcommittee's respective economic or industry sector.

(2) Subcommittees must be established to encourage development of apprenticeship programs in the areas of building trades, manufacturing and engineering, health care and behavioral health, education and early learning, information and communications technology, biotechnology and life sciences, hospitality, state agencies, maritime, and other identified economic or industry growth sectors.

(3) The department of labor and industries must assign an industry liaison to support each subcommittee.

(4) The subcommittees must report at least annually to the apprenticeship council on the following within their economic or industry sector:

   (a) Participation in existing approved apprenticeship programs;
   (b) Progress in developing new apprenticeship programs; and
   (c) Any review of competencies and curricula.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. A new section is added to chapter 49.04 RCW to read as follows:

The governor shall establish a committee of state agency human resources managers to undertake the development of appropriate apprenticeship programs for state agencies, involving the collective bargaining representatives for their agencies as potential apprenticeship pathways are considered and developed. The current registered apprenticeship program for industrial insurance at the department of labor and industries shall be consulted as a model for other agencies.

Sec. 4. RCW 49.04.050 and 2011 c 308 s 4 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) To be eligible for registration, apprenticeship program standards must conform to the rules adopted under this chapter.

(2) The department of labor and industries must require new apprenticeship programs seeking approval to provide a plan for future
sustainability of the program. No apprenticeship program may be approved without demonstrating that within 10 years of approval the program will be financially sustainable independent of any state funds provided to start the program.

(3) When evaluating applications for new apprenticeship programs, the apprenticeship council must consider whether graduating apprentices will earn a living wage, the availability of a career ladder to graduating apprentices, or the existence of other nonwage benefits as factors in the approval process.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 5. A new section is added to chapter 49.04 RCW to read as follows:

(1) A grant program for technology and remote learning infrastructure modernization of state registered apprenticeships is established.

(2) The department of labor and industries must manage and oversee the grant program and may establish application procedures and criteria for the receipt of grants. The department of labor and industries must require grant applications to include a plan to sustain the technology and remote learning infrastructure over time independent of any state funds provided.

(3) Subject to the availability of funds appropriated for this specific purpose, the department of labor and industries may award one-time grants to existing state registered joint apprenticeship programs for modernizing technology and remote learning infrastructure.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 6. A new section is added to chapter 49.04 RCW to read as follows:

(1) A grant program for wrap-around support services to mitigate barriers to beginning or participating in state registered apprenticeship programs is established. Support services shall include provisions for child care, health care, transportation to job sites, and other support services necessary to mitigate barriers to beginning or participating in state registered apprenticeship programs.

(2) The department of labor and industries must manage and oversee the grant program and may establish application procedures and criteria for the receipt of grants.
(3) Subject to the availability of funds appropriated for this specific purpose, the department of labor and industries may award grants to nonprofit organizations and joint apprenticeship training committees that support individuals currently in, or seeking to enter, state registered apprenticeship programs by providing, or connecting apprentices to, wrap-around services, including child care, professional clothing, required tools, or transportation.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 7. A new section is added to chapter 49.04 RCW to read as follows:

(1) A grant program for updating equipment in existing state registered apprenticeship programs is established.

(2) The department of labor and industries must manage and oversee the grant program and may establish application procedures and criteria for the receipt of grants.

(3) Subject to the availability of funds appropriated for this specific purpose, the department of labor and industries may award grants to existing state registered joint apprenticeship programs to upgrade equipment necessary for the program.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 8. A new section is added to chapter 49.04 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Subject to the availability of funds appropriated for this specific purpose, the department of labor and industries must provide vouchers to cover the cost of driver's education courses for students enrolled in a state registered youth apprenticeship program.

(2) The department of labor and industries may establish application and award procedures for implementing this section.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 9. A new section is added to chapter 49.04 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The department of labor and industries must conduct an apprentice retention study of state registered apprentices. The study must collect data from apprentices that are six months into their apprenticeships on the barriers and challenges new apprentices encounter that may prevent them from continuing their apprenticeships.

(2) The department of labor and industries must aggregate the data collected in subsection (1) of this section by trade and post the data on a dashboard on its public website annually.

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(3) The department of labor and industries must use the data collected under this section to work with apprenticeship coordinators to implement an early alert response system to connect apprentices with needed support and wrap-around services.

(4) By December 1, 2026, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the department of labor and industries must submit a report to the legislature on its key findings on the barriers and challenges in retaining apprentices and its recommendations.

(5) This section expires December 31, 2027.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 10. (1) The department of labor and industries must develop a list of options for incentivizing apprenticeship utilization in the private sector, especially in nontraditional industries that have lower apprenticeship utilization rates.

(2) By December 1, 2022, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the department of labor and industries must submit a report to the legislature detailing the list of options for incentivizing apprenticeship utilization developed in subsection (1) of this section.

(3) This section expires December 31, 2023.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 11. (1) By December 1, 2022, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the office of the superintendent of public instruction, in collaboration with career connect Washington, must submit a report to the legislature detailing the requirements and options for, and any barriers to, high schools in this state having a career pathways day once per year for students in their junior year of high school on a teacher professional development day, including any recommendations on necessary legislative actions.

(2) This section expires December 31, 2023.

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