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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1821**

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**State of Washington**

**68th Legislature**

**2023 Regular Session**

**By** House Postsecondary Education & Workforce (originally sponsored by Representatives Slatter, Timmons, and Pollet)

READ FIRST TIME 02/17/23.

1       AN    ACT    Relating   to   creating   a   postsecondary   credential  
2   transparency   work   group;   and   adding   new   sections   to   chapter   28C.18  
3   RCW.

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

5       NEW SECTION.   **Sec. 1.**   A new section is added to chapter 28C.18  
6   RCW to read as follows:

7       (1) A credential transparency work group is created within the  
8   board.

9       (2) The purpose of the credential transparency work group is to:

10      (a) Increase postsecondary credential transparency by improving,  
11   through a student-centered and worker-centered focus, the ability of  
12   students, workers, employers, educators, policymakers, and the  
13   general public to better understand and evaluate the full range of  
14   credentials delivered or issued in, or funded or governed by, the  
15   state;

16      (b) Identify and disseminate valuable fields of information  
17   across credentials to support understanding, evaluation, and decision  
18   making. Such fields include, but are not limited to, credential type,  
19   time to degree, initial and potential lifetime earnings, employer  
20   demand location, modality, credential provider, and potential job and  
21   career paths;

1 (c) Review existing state credential platforms, data  
2 infrastructures, and projects; and

3 (d) Identify best practices to increase credential transparency  
4 through, for example, existing programs at state institutions of  
5 higher education, licensing, registered apprenticeships, and career  
6 connected learning.

7 (3) The credential transparency work group shall provide  
8 recommendations to, and may contract with, at least one state  
9 credential transparency platform. The work group shall consider  
10 credential transparency platforms, statutes, and policies in other  
11 states in recommending or developing the following:

12 (a) A shared definition of credential;

13 (b) Common credential terminology;

14 (c) Changes, if needed, to state credential platforms, data  
15 infrastructures, and projects to support understanding, transparency,  
16 evaluation, and decision making;

17 (d) A proposal to recognize learning that occurs through paid  
18 work and career connected learning opportunities;

19 (e) A statewide communications plan to increase credential  
20 awareness among credential providers and potential users including,  
21 but not limited to, students, workers, employers, teachers, guidance  
22 counselors, and parents; and

23 (f) The continuation and scope of its work under subsection (2)  
24 of this section.

25 (4) The credential transparency work group shall identify up to  
26 four workforce industry sectors that have statewide reach and  
27 contribute to the state's workforce development system to develop  
28 industry demonstration projects to test the concepts of credential  
29 transparency. The board, in consultation with the work group, shall  
30 communicate with employer and worker associations within those  
31 sectors to identify potential applicants for demonstration funding.  
32 Two statewide occupations within each sector will be identified as  
33 the focus for the industry demonstration projects. Each industry  
34 shall select a lead organization and a network of partners to fulfill  
35 the requirements of the demonstration projects.

36 (a) Each of the four industry demonstration projects must:

37 (i) Identify diverse approaches to obtaining credentials across a  
38 range of providers within the chosen occupations;

39 (ii) Chart the skills, behaviors, abilities, and knowledge  
40 required for occupational pathways within the chosen occupations; and

1 (iii) Collect credential data within the chosen occupations,  
2 defined and determined by the work group using the common credential  
3 terminology.

4 (b) The board, in consultation with the work group, shall provide  
5 technical assistance to the industry demonstration projects to  
6 complete occupational skill analysis using the common credential  
7 terminology identified by the work group.

8 (c) The industry sectors demonstration project leads shall report  
9 to the work group the preliminary results of the data collected under  
10 this subsection by October 1, 2024, and final results by October 1,  
11 2025.

12 (d) To the extent possible, the work group shall incorporate the  
13 data and information collected under (a) of this subsection into web-  
14 based tools and services, maintained and published by the board, that  
15 present information to allow users such as students, workers,  
16 employers, educators, and others to understand, evaluate, and make  
17 decisions about credentials and maximize the user's most equitable  
18 outcome.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28C.18  
20 RCW to read as follows:

21 (1) The board shall staff the credential transparency work group  
22 and as appropriated, administer funds and other resources to support  
23 the industry demonstration projects established in section 1 of this  
24 act, the enhancement of credential transparency portals, and  
25 activities necessary to make recommendations described in section 1  
26 of this act. The executive director of the board shall have  
27 authority, in consultation with the work group, to add members to the  
28 work group as needed.

29 (2) The credential transparency work group must consist of, but  
30 is not limited to, representatives from the following groups:

- 31 (a) The public four-year institutions of higher education;
- 32 (b) The community and technical colleges;
- 33 (c) The independent colleges of Washington member institutions;
- 34 (d) Industry including employers and worker organizations;
- 35 (e) Postsecondary and K-12 students;
- 36 (f) The state board for community and technical colleges;
- 37 (g) The council of presidents;
- 38 (h) The independent colleges of Washington;
- 39 (i) The office of the superintendent of public instruction;

- 1 (j) The state board of education;  
2 (k) The employment security department;  
3 (l) The Washington student achievement council;  
4 (m) The northwest career colleges federation;  
5 (n) The state's workforce development councils;  
6 (o) The Washington state apprenticeship and training council;  
7 (p) Career connect Washington;  
8 (q) The department of licensing;  
9 (r) The department of veterans affairs;  
10 (s) The board; and  
11 (t) Job seekers and mid-career workers.

12 (3) The credential transparency work group shall report to the  
13 appropriate committees of the legislature, in accordance with RCW  
14 43.01.036, findings from and recommendations for section 1(3) of this  
15 act by November 30, 2024.

16 (4) The credential transparency work group shall report to the  
17 appropriate committees of the legislature, in accordance with RCW  
18 43.01.036, findings and recommendations from section 1(4) of this act  
19 by November 30, 2025, and each November 30th thereafter.

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