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**SENATE BILL 5958**

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**State of Washington**

**68th Legislature**

**2024 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Boehnke, Dozier, Torres, and C. Wilson

Prefiled 01/03/24. Read first time 01/08/24. Referred to Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing the Washington career skills  
2 grant program; adding new sections to chapter 43.131 RCW; and adding  
3 a new chapter to Title 28B RCW.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The definitions in this section apply  
6 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires  
7 otherwise.

8 (1) "Eligible student" means a student who:

9 (a) Is a resident student, as defined in RCW 28B.15.012;

10 (b) Is enrolled in a short-term workforce credential in an in-  
11 demand industry;

12 (c) Is enrolled in a noncredit bearing educational program that  
13 is ineligible for federal or state financial aid; and

14 (d) Has not yet earned a baccalaureate degree.

15 (2) "In-demand industry" means an industry with a nexus to the  
16 retail sector.

17 (3) "Institutions of higher education" has the same meaning as in  
18 RCW 28B.92.030.

19 (4) "Office" means the office of student financial assistance.

20 (5) "Program" means the Washington career skills grant program.

1 (6) "Short-term workforce credential" means a high quality  
2 noncredit-bearing short-term workforce credential as determined by  
3 the office with a clear workforce benefit. The credential must be  
4 able to be completed in 12 months or less.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The Washington career skills grant  
6 program is established for the purpose of incentivizing the creation  
7 of short-term and micro credentialing opportunities and programs  
8 relevant to the retail sector by providing grants to eligible  
9 students enrolled in these high quality short-term workforce  
10 credential programs.

11 (2) The office shall administer the program. In administering the  
12 program, the office's powers and duties may include, but are not  
13 limited to:

14 (a) Establishing a grant maximum, not to exceed the maximum  
15 Washington college grant as defined in RCW 28B.92.030, plus \$500 for  
16 books and supplies;

17 (b) Developing a process for collecting the necessary data to  
18 evaluate the effectiveness of the program. This may include entering  
19 into data-sharing agreements with the participating institutions of  
20 higher education, program participants, the education research and  
21 data center, and the employment security department to monitor  
22 program participant outcomes;

23 (c) Adopting the rules necessary to carry out the program.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) Subject to amounts appropriated  
25 specifically for this purpose, the office may award program grant  
26 funds to eligible students. Grants may not:

27 (a) Exceed the grant maximum established by the office;

28 (b) Exceed the student's cost of attendance, when combined with  
29 all other public and private grants, scholarships, and waiver  
30 assistance the student receives; and

31 (c) Extend beyond one year or 125 percent of the published  
32 program length.

33 (2) Students and participating institutions of higher education  
34 must comply with all the rules adopted by the office for the  
35 administration of this chapter.

1        NEW SECTION.        **Sec. 4.**        Beginning October 1, 2025, and in  
2 compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the office shall annually report to  
3 the appropriate committees of the legislature the following:

4        (1) The names of each participating institution of higher  
5 education and the eligible short-term workforce credentials at each  
6 participating institution;

7        (2) The number of students eligible and the number of students  
8 who participated in the program each academic year along with student  
9 demographic characteristics;

10       (3) Data on program completion and credential attainment by  
11 students who participated in the grant program; and

12       (4) Precredential and postcredential completion wage data for  
13 program participants.

14       NEW SECTION.        **Sec. 5.**        Sections 1 through 4 of this act  
15 constitute a new chapter in Title 28B RCW.

16       NEW SECTION.        **Sec. 6.**        A new section is added to chapter 43.131  
17 RCW to read as follows:

18       The Washington career skills grant program is terminated July 1,  
19 2029, as provided in section 7 of this act.

20       NEW SECTION.        **Sec. 7.**        A new section is added to chapter 43.131  
21 RCW to read as follows:

22       The following acts or parts of acts, as now existing or hereafter  
23 amended, are each repealed, effective July 1, 2030:

24       (1) RCW 28B.--.--- and 2024 c . . . s 1 (section 1 of this act);

25       (2) RCW 28B.--.--- and 2024 c . . . s 2 (section 2 of this act);

26       (3) RCW 28B.--.--- and 2024 c . . . s 3 (section 3 of this act);

27       and

28       (4) RCW 28B.--.--- and 2024 c . . . s 4 (section 4 of this act).

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