

1 Introduced by Committee on Commerce and Economic Development  
2 Referred to Committee on  
3 Date:  
4 Subject: Commerce and trade; workforce development  
5 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to provide a  
6 framework for a public engagement process and succeeding steps to modernize  
7 **and strengthen** the State workforce development system.

8 An act relating to workforce development

9 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

10 Sec. 1. FINDINGS AND INTENT

11 (a) Findings. The General Assembly finds:

12 (1) A skilled and productive workforce is critical for the economic  
13 vitality of Vermont. However, our State currently faces several key labor  
14 market challenges:

15 (A) Employers throughout our State are **facing an extremely serious**  
16 **and ongoing skills gap** due to the lack of qualified workers to fill a wide range  
17 of jobs across multiple sectors, today and into the future.

18 (B) Vermont has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the  
19 country, and there are not enough workers at all skill levels to fill current job  
20 vacancies.

1           (C) Many Vermonters are underemployed and require training to  
2           update their skills and find available job opportunities that match their  
3           interests.

4           (D) Many Vermonters who are unemployed or underemployed face  
5           significant barriers to employment and require more support in overcoming  
6           these barriers.

7           (E) Parents, youths, and families are facing a future where the next  
8           generation of workers may not have the same opportunities to prosper as the  
9           previous one.

10           (F) Vermont has a series of fragmented workforce development  
11           programs, but not a unified workforce development system. The recently  
12           reconstituted State Workforce Development Board is central to creating such a  
13           system.

14           (2) A major part of the solution to these challenges lies in Vermont’s  
15           building an effective and efficient State workforce development system that is  
16           a diverse public-private partnership among employers, government, and  
17           education and training providers designed to ensure that individuals have the  
18           skills needed by businesses.

19           (b) Intent. In adopting this act, it is the intent of the General Assembly:

20           (1) to commit to a redesign of Vermont’s workforce development and  
21           training system through a concerted three-year effort led by the Commissioner

1 of Labor, in collaboration with key administration partners, the education and  
2 training communities, and other stakeholders from business and government.

3 (2) to create a framework for this three-year process that will result in a  
4 more coherent, efficient, and effective workforce development system within  
5 which:

6 (A) all Vermonters who want to work, and all employers who want  
7 workers, can connect through education and training with what they need to  
8 thrive; and

9 (B) stakeholders and programs, both inside and outside State  
10 government, are optimally connected and aligned.

11 Sec. 2. STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT; PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT  
12 PROCESS; DUTIES

13 (a)(1) The State Workforce Development Board, in cooperation with the  
14 Department of Labor, Agencies of Commerce and Community Development,  
15 Education, Human Services, Agriculture, Natural Resources, and  
16 Transportation, shall conduct a public engagement process consistent with 20  
17 C.F.R. §679.100, 679.130 and 10 V.S.A. §541a to establish a vision and shared  
18 goals for meeting Vermont’s 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce education, training,  
19 recruitment, and retention needs.

20 (2) The public engagement process shall be designed to inform  
21 workforce-related aspects of other state strategic plans and reports, including

1 the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act State Plan, the State Economic  
2 Development Marketing Plan, and the Statewide Comprehensive Economic  
3 Development Strategy.

4 (3) In evaluating the current workforce service delivery system, the  
5 Board shall use a data-driven process and solicit the perspectives of job-  
6 seekers, incumbent workers, employers, industry representatives, program  
7 administrators, and workforce service delivery providers.

8 (4)(A) The Board shall adopt a vision and describe the State’s collective  
9 goals by February 1, 2020.

10 (B) The vision, goals, and any findings or recommendations shall be  
11 posted online.

12 (C) The Board shall provide advance notice to the Chair and Vice-  
13 Chair of the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and  
14 the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General  
15 Affairs if the recommendations may require legislative action during the 2020  
16 legislative session.

17 (5) The vision and goals should serve as the basis for an action plan to  
18 revitalize Vermont’s workforce development system.

19 (b) The Board may create a social network map of workforce service  
20 delivery providers, employers, workforce program administrators, and industry  
21 representatives to:

1           (1) develop baseline data of how individuals and organizations, both  
2           within and outside State government, are involved with workforce  
3           development and training around the State;

4           (2) analyze the relative level of connectivity of people and programs  
5           managed inside and outside State government; and

6           (3) identify opportunities to strengthen connectivity to achieve greater  
7           program alignment toward and realize the Board’s vision for the State’s  
8           workforce development and training system.

9           (c) The Board shall identify what resources are necessary to maintain the  
10           network map over time and track changes in levels of connectivity and  
11           alignment across the stakeholder community.

12           (d) The Board may, in compliance with any employment and  
13           confidentiality regulations, and after reviewing currently available data and  
14           resources, collect information from:

15           (1) “front line” service delivery providers to understand how the current  
16           system is and is not serving the needs of job seekers and employers;

17           (2) employers and employees to understand the effectiveness of  
18           existing workforce programs; and

19           (3) past and present participants of training programs to understand if  
20           the program met their expectations and led to a job in their field of interest or  
21           training.

1           (e) The Board may initiate activities to improve understanding by  
2           stakeholders concerning:

3                   (1) the workforce development system;

4                   (2) the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act;

5                   (3) the role of the Board; and

6                   (4) how the Act governs workforce development funding and policies  
7           implemented by the State.

8           (f) The Board, in cooperation with the Department of Labor, Agencies of  
9           Commerce and Community Development, Education, Human Services,  
10           Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Transportation, shall review methods of  
11           employer engagement and evaluate the tools available to employers to  
12           facilitate their access to and retention of workers. The Board may recommend  
13           strategies for improvement to address:

14                   (1) how employer outreach positions in each of the State-funded field  
15           offices might be shared;

16                   (2) what type of coordination is needed between the State level  
17           employer outreach staff and local workforce organizations, including staff of  
18           the regional development corporations and regional planning commissions, to  
19           better serve employers;

20                   (3) whether establishing a One Stop American Job Center in each region  
21           to provide comprehensive customer-driven services for employers and job

1 seekers could serve businesses better, improve responsiveness to emerging  
2 sector needs, and increase access to qualified, available workers through direct  
3 outreach and recruitment;

4 (4) scaling or expanding pilot projects that link career coaches, or other  
5 experts with industry knowledge, directly within middle or high schools, or  
6 both, to foster career readiness and exploration; and

7 (5) ways to share data and information collected from employers among  
8 parties who implement workforce development programs.

9 (g) The Board shall review how functions performed by local workforce  
10 investment boards, career technical education regional advisory boards,  
11 regional planning commissions, regional development corporations, and other  
12 regional economic development and workforce related boards could be more  
13 equitably executed from region to region, and recommend structures that  
14 would foster better regional collaboration, alignment, and employer  
15 participation.

16 (h) Following the public engagement process outlined in subsection (a) of  
17 this section, the Board may make recommendations to align relevant funding  
18 sources to promote:

19 (1) employer-driven workforce education and training opportunities;

20 (2) results-based **outcomes**;

1           (3) innovative and effective initiatives, pilots, or demonstration programs  
2           that can be scaled to the rest of the State;

3           (4) access to federal resources that enable more innovative programs  
4           and initiatives in Vermont; and

5           (5) equitable access to employment and training opportunities for  
6           women and underrepresented populations in Vermont.

7           (i) The Department of Labor, with assistance from the Board, shall  
8           facilitate the sharing of information among workforce development and  
9           training delivery organizations so they may stay current with initiatives and  
10          plans related to building an effective workforce development system.

11          Sec. 3. STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT; CAREER PATHWAYS;  
12          CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

13          (a) As used in this section “Career Pathways” means a combination of  
14          rigorous and high quality education, training, and other experiences and  
15          services, beginning not later than seventh grade, with multiple entry and exit  
16          points that:

17               (1) at the secondary level, integrate the academic and technical skills  
18               required for postsecondary success;

19               (2) are developed in partnership with business and industry and align  
20               with the skill needs of industries in the local, regional, and State economies;



1           (3) prepares an individual to transition seamlessly from secondary to  
2           postsecondary experiences and be successful in any of a full range of  
3           secondary or postsecondary education options, including registered  
4           apprenticeships;

5           (4) includes career counseling and work-based learning experiences to  
6           support an individual in achieving the individual’s education and career goals;

7           (5) includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in  
8           the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific  
9           occupation or occupational cluster;

10           (6) organizes education, training, and other experiences and services to  
11           meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the  
12           educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable;

13           (7) enables an individual to gain a secondary school diploma or its  
14           recognized equivalent, and that allows for college credit and industry  
15           certifications to be earned in high school; and

16           (8) helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or  
17           occupational cluster.

18           (b) The Agency of Education, in partnership with the State Workforce  
19           Development Board, shall promote policies that support introduction of CTE  
20           programs of study to middle school students, along with career readiness and  
21           awareness activities.

1       (c) The Agency of Education, in partnership with the Board, shall promote  
2       collaboration among middle schools and regional CTE centers to:

3           (1) develop and deliver introductory CTE courses or lessons to expose  
4       middle school students to Career Pathways and CTE programs, as appropriate;

5           (2) provide exposure to local career opportunities through activities such  
6       as business tours, guest lecturers, career fairs, and career awareness days; and

7           (3) provide middle school students with exposure to CTE programs  
8       through activities such as tours of regional CTE centers, virtual field trips, and  
9       CTE guest visits.

10       (d) The Agency of Education, in partnership with the Board, shall promote  
11       flexible and student-centered policies that:

12           (1) support equitable access and opportunity to participate in pre-tech  
13       foundation and pre-tech exploratory programs, for students in grades 9 and 10,  
14       when supported by their personalized learning plans, so that students are  
15       exposed to a wide variety of career choices in their areas of interest; and

16           (2) ensure that students in grade 10 have access to courses in CTE  
17       programs when supported by their personalized learning plans.

18       (e) The Agency of Education, in partnership with the Board, shall direct  
19       CTE centers to provide rigorous programs of study to students that are aligned  
20       with an approved Career Pathway and in combination with a registered  
21       apprenticeship when appropriate.

1       (f) The Agency of Education, in partnership with the Department of Labor  
2       and the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, shall implement  
3       a process for reviewing Career Pathways that considers:

4             (1) program relevance to State and regional employer need;

5             (2) participation of regional advisory boards or other boards with  
6       employers;

7             (3) pathways to postsecondary education and training; and

8             (4) ability for students to gain credentials of value, dual enrollment  
9       credits, postsecondary credential or degree attainment, and employment.

10       (g) The Agency of Education shall report on its Career Pathways review  
11       process, findings, and recommendations to the Board on a regular basis.

12       (h) The Board may identify opportunities to leverage Workforce  
13       Innovation and Opportunity Act funds, Carl D. Perkins Act funds, Next  
14       Generation funds, Vermont Training Program funds, and other relevant  
15       funding sources to develop community-based Career Pathways that respond to  
16       local occupational demands.

17       (i) The Agency of Education, in partnership with the Board, shall work to  
18       ensure that every high school student has the opportunity to experience  
19       meaningful work-based learning when supported by the personalized learning  
20       plan, and that high schools work with regional CTE centers to avoid  
21       unnecessary duplication of opportunities already provided by the centers.

1       (j) The General Assembly shall create a permanent classified position  
2       within the Agency of Education to perform the functions currently performed  
3       by the limited service Career Pathways Coordinator position.

4       (k) The Agency of Education and the Department of Labor shall support  
5       coordination and alignment of programs of study delivered by the regional  
6       CTE centers and the State’s postsecondary institutions so that education and  
7       training opportunities available to secondary and adult students lead to a  
8       degree or stackable credential of value.

9       (l) The Agency of Education, with guidance from a committee of the  
10       Board, shall create two pilot projects that model a unified funding and  
11       governance structure designed to streamline the delivery of the educational  
12       experiences of both high school and CTE students.

13       (m) The Department of Labor shall be responsible for the oversight and  
14       coordination of adult career technical education in the State. The Agency of  
15       Education shall provide technical and programmatic assistance, as necessary,  
16       to the Department to ensure alignment between secondary and post-secondary  
17       policies and funding.

18       Sec. 4. STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD;

19       STRENGTHENING AND ALIGNING WORKFORCE TRAINING

20       PROGRAMS

1        (a) The State Workforce Development Board shall take steps to encourage,  
2        promote, and support the creation of registered apprenticeship programs, pre-  
3        apprenticeship programs, paid internships, occupational trainings, and other  
4        work-based and on-the-job learning opportunities that lead to industry  
5        recognized certificates and credentials. The Board shall consider ways to meet  
6        employers’ immediate and long-term employment needs in a variety of ways  
7        that can include:

8                (1) expanding the number and diversity of employer-sponsored  
9                registered apprenticeships;

10               (2) promoting the development and access to pre-apprenticeship  
11               programs in high schools and career and technical education centers;

12               (3) engaging Vermont’s colleges and universities in delivering the  
13               related instruction components of registered apprenticeship programs;

14               (4) expanding the number of internships and returnships available in  
15               current and new sectors;

16               (5) developing partnerships and alignment between training programs  
17               offered in correctional facilities and those offered in business or community  
18               settings; and

19               (6) registered apprenticeship programs that guarantee offers of continued  
20               employment or consideration for future employment upon completion of the  
21               program.

1        (b) The Board shall create a process for identifying, monitoring, and  
2        evaluating occupational trainings and industry-recognized credentials. The  
3        Board may consider establishing a process for endorsing credentials and  
4        certificate programs to facilitate targeted investments in programs that meet  
5        industry needs.

6        (c) The Board shall create and review periodically publicly available  
7        documents that list:

8            (1) current industry, State, and federally recognized credentials;

9            (2) requirements to obtain these credentials;

10          (3) training programs that lead to these credentials; and

11          (4) the cost of training and educational programs required to obtain the  
12          credential.

13          (d) The Board shall work with the Office of Professional Regulation to  
14          increase recognition of professional skills and credentialing across states, in  
15          addition to supporting professional paths that involve more than one industry,  
16          state, or federally recognized credential and rules adopted by the Office;

17        Sec. 5. STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD; GROWING THE  
18        SIZE AND QUALITY OF THE WORKFORCE

19          (a) The Department of Labor and the Agencies of Commerce and  
20          Community Development and Human Services, in partnership with the State  
21          Workforce Development Board, shall take steps to:

1           (1) increase labor force participation of Vermonters by creating  
2           multitiered engagement, training, and support activities that help working age  
3           Vermonters who are able to participate, or participate to a greater degree, in the  
4           workforce, in consultation with the Agency of Education; and

5           (2) recruit and relocate new workers and employers to Vermont ; and

6           (3) assist businesses in locating and retaining qualified workers.

7           (b) To meet these objectives, the Department of Labor and the Agencies of  
8           Commerce and Community Development and Human Services, in consultation  
9           with the Agency of Education, shall:

10           (A) engage regional and statewide stakeholders, including regional  
11           CTE centers, regional development corporations, and regional planning  
12           commissions, to identify needs, strategies, and define success;

13           (B) identify targets and methods of recruitment, relocation, re-  
14           training, and retention;

15           (C) leverage resources available in current State and federal programs  
16           to support more workers within and outside of Vermont entering and staying in  
17           the workforce; and

18           (D) create metrics for tracking the success of outreach efforts and  
19           economic impact.

20           (c) The Board may examine incentives to encourage participation in the  
21           labor force by target populations, including unemployment insurance waivers,

1 income tax reductions, exemption of State tax on Social Security, housing and  
2 transportation vouchers, tuition and training reimbursements, or waivers for  
3 training. The Board shall notify the House Committee on Commerce and  
4 Economic Development of any findings or recommendations, as appropriate.

5 Sec. 6. VERMONT TALENT PIPELINE MANAGEMENT PROJECT

6 (a) Findings. The General Assembly finds:

7 (1) The Vermont Talent Pipeline Management Project (VTPM) is an  
8 employer-oriented strategy that expands the role of employers as end-  
9 customers of the education and workforce systems. VTPM seeks to improve  
10 the employability of Vermonters and the alignment of employer needs with  
11 education and workforce development and training programs.

12 (2) VTPM is a statewide public and private partnership among the  
13 Agency of Commerce and Community Development, Brattleboro  
14 Development Credit Corporation, Franklin/Grand Isle Workforce Investment  
15 Board, Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce, and Vermont  
16 Business Roundtable. It is informed by resource partners including the  
17 Agency of Education, Greater Burlington Industrial Corporation, State  
18 Workforce Development Board, Vermont Chamber of Commerce, and the  
19 Vermont Student Assistance Corporation.

20 (3) Partners will coordinate the network of training providers to deliver  
21 industry, State, and federally recognized credentials, job training, and



1 workforce education in targeted job areas, sectors, and industries which  
2 connect to the skills employers are looking for when filling available positions.

3 (b) Intent. It is the intent of the General Assembly:

4 (1) to acknowledge the importance of VTPM as a unique, statewide,  
5 employer-led model in its start-up phase with pilots in key industries;

6 (2) to support development, scale-up, funding, and roll-out of VTPM  
7 across all economic sectors, sizes of business, and regions of the State by  
8 training regional partners in local communities statewide; and

9 (3) to encourage the Agency of Education, Department of Labor, the  
10 State Workforce Development Board, and VTPM to collaborate in identifying  
11 and developing additional credentialing programs within applicable industries.

## 12 Sec. 7. RESULTS BASED MONITORING

13 (a) The Department of Labor, with the assistance of the Government  
14 Accountability Committee and the State Workforce Development Board, shall  
15 develop a framework to evaluate workforce education, training, and support  
16 programs and services. The framework shall be applied to the State's  
17 workforce system inventory and shall distinguish programs and services based  
18 on method of delivery, customer, program administrator, goal, or other  
19 appropriate category. The framework shall:

20 (1) create population level indicators based on desired outcomes for the  
21 workforce development delivery system;

1           (2) along with social network mapping work that the Board may pursue,  
2           support program and service alignment of State-grant-funded projects with the  
3           State Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Plan

4           (3) align with the Board’s vision;

5           (4) note performance measures that already exist in the workforce  
6           system and identify where State-specific measures would help monitor progress  
7           in achieving the State’s goals; and

8           (5) identify gaps in service delivery and areas of duplication in services.

9           (b) The State Workforce Development Board shall consider whether the  
10          information and data currently collected and reported throughout the workforce  
11          development system is useful and shall identify what information and data are  
12          not available or readily accessible. The Board shall make its findings available  
13          and recommend a process to improve the collection and reporting of data.

14          (c) The State Workforce Development Board may create a process and a  
15          timeline to collect program level data for the purposes of updating the State’s  
16          workforce system inventory.

17          (d) The State Workforce Development Board may develop tools for  
18          program and service delivery providers that support continuous improvement  
19          using data-driven decision making, common information-sharing systems, and  
20          a customer-focused service delivery system.

21          Sec. 8. 10 V.S.A. chapter 22A is amended to read:

1            CHAPTER 22A. WORKFORCE EDUCATION AND TRAINING

2            § 540. WORKFORCE EDUCATION AND TRAINING LEADER

3            The Commissioner of Labor shall be the leader of workforce education and  
4 training in the State, and shall have the authority and responsibility for the  
5 coordination of workforce education and training within State government,  
6 including the following duties:

7            (1) Perform the following duties in consultation with the State

8 Workforce Development Board:

9    \* \* \*

10            (G) design and implement criteria and performance measures for  
11 workforce education and training activities; and

12            (H) establish goals for the integrated workforce education and  
13 training system; and

14            (I) with the assistance of the Secretaries of Education, of Human  
15 Services, of Commerce and Community Development, Agriculture, and of  
16 Transportation and of the Commissioner of Public Safety, develop and  
17 implement a coordinated system to recruit, relocate, and train workers to  
18 ensure the labor force needs of Vermont’s businesses are met.

19    \* \* \*



1 and other economic development planning processes, and coordinate  
2 workforce and education activities in the State, including the development and  
3 implementation of the State plan required under the Workforce Innovation and  
4 Opportunity Act of 2014, with economic development planning processes  
5 occurring in the State, as appropriate.

6 (2) In order to ensure that State-funded and federally funded workforce  
7 development and training efforts are of the highest quality and aligned with the  
8 State’s workforce and economic goals, the Board shall regularly:

9 (A) Review and approve State-endorsed Career Pathways that reflect  
10 a shared vision across multiple sectors and agencies for improving  
11 employment outcomes, meeting employers’ and workers’ needs, and best  
12 leveraging available State and federal funding.

13 (i) Career Pathways shall encompass educational and training  
14 experiences from middle school to the postsecondary years, and may focus on  
15 particular target populations or industry sectors.

16 (ii) Career Pathways shall include or culminate in degrees,  
17 certificates, and other relevant credentials approved by the Board.

18 (B) Publicize the State-endorsed Career Pathways, including on  
19 websites managed by the Agency of Education, Department of Labor, and  
20 Department of Economic Development.

1           (3)(A) The Board shall have the authority to approve State-endorsed and  
2           industry-recognized credentials and certificates, excluding high school  
3           diplomas and postsecondary academic degrees, that are aligned with the Career  
4           Pathways.

5           (B) The Board shall design a review process that ensures:

6                   (i) business and industry are participants are engaged early in the  
7                   process;

8                   (ii) the credential review process involves a concerted, cross-  
9                   institution effort;

10                   (iii) credentials are differentiated based on rigor and industry  
11                   demand; and

12                   (iv) systems are designed to be adaptive.

13           (C) The Board shall ensure that a review and oversight process is in  
14           place on or before July 1, 2019.

15   \* \* \*

16       § 543. WORKFORCE EDUCATION AND TRAINING FUND; GRANT  
17   PROGRAMS

18           (a) Creation. There is created the Workforce Education and Training Fund  
19           in the Department of Labor to be managed in accordance with 32 V.S.A.  
20           chapter 7, subchapter 5.

1 (b) Purposes. The Department shall use the Fund for the following  
2 purposes:

3 (1) training for Vermont workers, including those who are unemployed,  
4 underemployed, or in transition from one job or career to another;

5 (2) internships to provide students with work-based learning  
6 opportunities with Vermont employers;

7 (3) apprenticeship, preapprenticeship, and industry-recognized  
8 credential training; and

9 (4) assisting small businesses in locating, hiring, and retaining workers;  
10 and

11 (5) other workforce development initiatives related to current and future  
12 job opportunities in Vermont as determined by the Commissioner of Labor.

13 \* \* \*

14 (f) Awards. The Commissioner of Labor, in consultation with the Chair of  
15 the State Workforce Development Board, shall develop award criteria and may  
16 grant awards to the following:

17 \* \* \*

18 (2) Vermont Strong Internship and Returnship Program. Funding for  
19 eligible internship programs and activities under the Vermont Strong  
20 Internship and Returnship Program established in section 544 of this title.

21 \* \* \*

1           (g) Career pathways. Programs that are funded under this section resulting  
2           in a credit, certificate, or a credential shall demonstrate alignment with a career  
3           pathway.

4           (h) Expanding offerings. A regional Career and Technical Education  
5           Center that develops an adult technical education program of study using  
6           funding under this section shall:

7                   (1) make the program materials available to other regional Career and  
8           Technical Education Centers and adult technical education programs;

9                   (2) to the extent possible, align the program with subsequent programs  
10           offered through the Vermont State College System, the University of Vermont  
11           and State Agricultural College, or an accredited independent college located in  
12           Vermont; and

13                   (3) respond to a current or projected occupational demand.

14   \* \* \*

15           § 545. VERMONT RETURNSHIP PROGRAM

16           (a) As used in this section “returnship” means an on-the-job learning  
17           experience working with an employer where an individual may, but does not  
18           necessarily, receive academic credit, financial remuneration, a stipend, or any  
19           combination of these.

20           (b)(1) The Department of Labor shall develop and implement a statewide  
21           Vermont Strong Returnship Program for individuals who are returning to the



1 workforce after an extended absence or are seeking a limited duration on-the-  
2 job work experience in a different occupation or occupational setting.

3 (2) The Department of Labor shall coordinate and provide funding to  
4 public and private entities for returnship programs and opportunities that match  
5 experienced workers with Vermont employers.

6 (3) Funding awarded through the Vermont Returnship Program may be  
7 used to build and administer coordinated and cohesive programs and to provide  
8 participants with a stipend during the returnship, based on need. Funds may be  
9 made only to programs or projects that:

10 (A) do not replace or supplant existing positions;

11 (B) expose individuals to real and meaningful workplace experiences;

12 (C) provide a process that measures progress toward mastery of skills,  
13 behavior, and other factors that indicate a likelihood of success in the  
14 workplace;

15 (D) are designed to motivate and educate participants through work-  
16 based learning opportunities with Vermont employers; or

17 (E) offer participants a continuum of learning, experience, and  
18 relationships with employers that will make it financially possible and  
19 attractive for individuals to continue to work and live in Vermont.

20 (c) The Department of Labor shall:

1           (1) identify new and existing funding sources that may be allocated to  
2           the Vermont Returnship Program;

3           (2) collect data and establish program goals and performance measures  
4           that demonstrate program results for returnship programs funded through the  
5           Vermont Returnship Program;

6           (3) engage appropriate agencies and departments of the State in the  
7           Returnship Program to expand returnship opportunities with State government  
8           and with entities awarded State contracts; and

9           (4) work with other public and private entities to develop and enhance  
10           returnship programs, opportunities, and activities throughout the State.

11       Sec. 9. APPROPRIATIONS

12           (a) In fiscal year 2019 the amount of \$150,000.00 is appropriated from the  
13           General Fund to the Department of Labor as administrative agent of the State  
14           Workforce Development Board to implement the provisions of this act.

15           (b) In fiscal year 2019 the amount of \$100,000.00 is appropriated from the  
16           General Fund to the Department of Labor to implement the Vermont Strong  
17           Returnship Program created in 10 V.S.A. § 545.

18           (c) In fiscal year 2019 the amount of \$100,000.00 is appropriated from the  
19           General Fund to the Department of Labor to implement the Vermont College  
20           Graduate Placement and Small Business Recruitment Initiative to provide

1 small businesses with support and resources to more effectively recruit new  
2 employees from among graduates of Vermont colleges and universities.

3 Sec. 10. REPORTING

4 (a) On or before January 15, 2019, the State Workforce Development  
5 Board shall report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic  
6 Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing  
7 and General Affairs concerning the implementation of this act.

8 (b) On or before January 15, 2019, the Department of Labor, in  
9 collaboration with the Agency of Education and the State Workforce  
10 Development Board, shall report to the House Committee on Commerce and  
11 Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic  
12 Development, Housing and General Affairs concerning:

13 (1) how to encourage more businesses to offer apprenticeships;

14 (2) how to encourage more labor force participation in apprenticeships;

15 and

16 (3) of the myriad federal and private apprenticeship opportunities  
17 available, which additional opportunities, and which industry sectors, should  
18 be offered or enhanced in Vermont.

19 Sec. 11. EFFECTIVE DATE

20 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2018.