

House Proposal of Amendment

S. 162

An act relating to promoting economic development.

The House proposes to the Senate to amend the bill by striking all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

* * * New Remote Worker Grant Program * * *

Sec. 1. 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 197, Sec. 1 is amended to read:

Sec. 1. NEW REMOTE WORKER GRANT PROGRAM

(a) As used in this section:

(1) “New remote worker” means an individual who:

(A) is a full-time employee of a business with its domicile or primary place of business within or outside Vermont;

(B) becomes a full-time resident of this State on or after January 1, 2019; and

(C) performs the majority of his or her employment duties remotely from a home office or a co-working space located in this State.

(2) “Qualifying remote worker expenses” means actual costs a new remote worker incurs for one or more of the following that are necessary to perform his or her employment duties:

(A) relocation to this State;

(B) computer software and hardware;

(C) broadband access or upgrade; and

(D) membership in a co-working or similar space.

(b)(1) The Agency of Commerce and Community Development shall design and implement the New Remote Worker Grant Program, which shall include a simple certification process to certify new remote workers and certify qualifying expenses for a grant under this section.

(2) A new remote worker may be eligible for a grant under the Program for qualifying remote worker expenses in the amount of not more than \$5,000.00 per year, not to exceed a total of \$10,000.00 per individual new remote worker over the life of the Program.

(3) The Agency shall award grants under the Program on a first-come, first-served basis, subject to available funding, as follows:

~~(A) not more than \$125,000.00 in calendar year 2019;~~

~~(B) not more than \$250,000.00 in calendar year 2020;~~

~~(C) not more than \$125,000.00 in calendar year 2021; and~~

~~(D) not more than \$100,000.00 per year in each subsequent calendar year, to the extent funding remains available.~~

(c) The Agency shall:

(1) adopt procedures for implementing the Program;

(2) promote awareness of the Program, including through coordination with relevant trade groups and by integration into the Agency's economic development marketing campaigns; and

(3) adopt measurable goals, performance measures, and an audit strategy to assess the utilization and performance of the Program.

(d) On or before October 1, 2019, the Agency shall submit a report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs concerning the implementation of this section, including:

(1) a description of the procedures adopted pursuant to subdivision (c)(1) of this section;

(2) the promotion and marketing of the Program pursuant to subdivision (c)(2) of this section; and

(3) any additional recommendations for qualifying remote worker expenses or qualifying workers that should be eligible under the Program, and any recommendations for the maximum amount of the grant.

* * * Vermont Employment Growth Incentive Program * * *

Sec. 2. REPEAL

32 V.S.A. § 3336 (enhanced incentive for workforce training) is repealed.

Sec. 3. VERMONT ECONOMIC PROGRESS COUNCIL; ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT; STUDY

(a) The Agency of Commerce and Community Development, in consultation with the Vermont Economic Progress Council and other interested stakeholders, shall study the creation of statewide economic development tools that achieve the goals of our current economic development programs, including the Vermont Employment Growth Incentive Program, the Tax Increment Financing Program, and the Vermont Training Program. The study shall include options that do not utilize resources from the Education Fund and options for how to sustain economic development in towns with both small and large populations.

(b) On or before January 15, 2020, the Agency shall submit a report to the House Committees on Commerce and Economic Development and on Ways and Means and the Senate Committees on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs and on Finance with recommendations on the feasibility of the tools described in subsection (a) of this section, and if feasible, how they would be implemented.

* * * Permitting and State-Owned Airports * * *

Sec. 4. FINDINGS

The General Assembly finds:

(1) On January 15, 2019, the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development and the Secretary of Transportation updated the State's Economic Development and Economic Development Marketing Plans to incorporate the marketing of State-owned airports as an important tool for attracting and retaining businesses, enhancing workforce development, spearheading crucial technology advancements, and growing commerce essential to Vermont's future.

(2) On January 15, 2019, the Secretary of Transportation submitted to the General Assembly its Feasibility Evaluation of Electric Vehicle Charging Stations, Electric Aircraft Charging Stations, and Renewable Energy Generating Plants at State-Owned Airports Pursuant to Act 108 of 2018. The Evaluation noted that State-owned airports are suitable sites for electric vehicle charging stations and electric aircraft charging stations, and that solar photovoltaic installations can be compatible with airport operations.

Sec. 5. DEFINITIONS

As used in this act:

(1) "State-owned airport master permit" means all permits necessary to construct infrastructure, buildings, runway access, and related assets in support of general aviation and aviation-focused commercial and manufacturing enterprises at State-owned airports, excluding activities associated with runway expansion and infrastructure required for general airport operations. Permits included in the State-owned airport master permit include any applicable Act 250 permit, any applicable permits issued by the Agencies of Natural Resources and of Transportation, the Division of Fire Safety, the Natural Resources Board, and the Public Utility Commission.

(2) "State-owned airport permit master plan" means a comprehensive plan to construct infrastructure, buildings, runway access, and related assets in support of general aviation and aviation-focused commercial and manufacturing enterprises at State-owned airports, excluding activities associated with runway expansion and infrastructure required for general airport operations. State-owned airport permit master plans may be developed

by the Agency of Transportation, in consultation with the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, for the review and approval by the Agency of Natural Resources, the Department of Public Safety, the Natural Resources Board, and the Public Utility Commission prior to the submission of applications for permits in the State-owned airport master permit.

(3) “Renewable energy” has the same meaning as in 30 V.S.A. § 8002.

(4) “Renewable energy generating plant” means real and personal property, including any equipment, structure, or facility used for or directly related to the generation of electricity from renewable energy.

Sec. 6. APPLICATIONS FOR MASTER PERMITS

(a) The Agency of Transportation, in consultation with the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, is encouraged to obtain, as swiftly as practicable, all permits in the State-owned master airport permit necessary for growth, development, and facility upgrades at each State-owned airport. State-owned airport permit master plans shall include charging stations for electrified aircraft and, when practical, renewable energy generating plants that advance the State’s preference to utilize all roof space for photovoltaic installations.

(b) In processing permits in the State-owned airport master permit sought by the Agency of Transportation, State agencies, departments, commissions, and boards may waive permit fees for all permits in the State-owned airport master permit provided that a State-owned airport permit master plan was reviewed and approved prior to the submission of any applications for permits in the State-owned master airport permit.

* * * Delivery of Vermont Technical College

Degree Programs at CTE Centers; Study; Pilot Programs * * *

Sec. 7. DELIVERY OF VERMONT TECHNICAL COLLEGE

DEGREE PROGRAMS AT CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION CENTERS IN VERMONT; STUDY; PILOT PROGRAMS

(a) Study by Vermont Technical College. The Vermont Technical College (VTC) shall study how to best deliver all or a portion of fully accredited VTC associate degree programs at CTE centers in Vermont. The study shall explore the viability of a new program to provide a locally convenient and financially affordable option to high school students and adult learners who want, while still enrolled with their CTE centers, to also enroll in a high-demand, high-skill, industry-specific associate degree offering. VTC shall collaborate with the CTE centers and the Agency of Education in conducting the study. In structuring the study, VTC shall consider:

(1) alignment of degree programs with workforce priority needs and career pathways identified by the Agency of Education;

(2) prevailing industry wages and gender equity in each identified career pathway;

(3) coherence with existing, State-supported postsecondary programs for secondary students, such as dual enrollment and early college programs under the flexible pathways laws, including potential impacts to, and alignment with, those programs;

(4) sustainable funding models, including costs for students, institutions, and adults;

(5) the financial risks of programmatic and funding model changes, with the goals of not negatively impacting the accreditation status or the financial status of any institution; and

(6) management of class scheduling and CTE partnerships to ensure access and programmatic success.

(b) Reports.

(1) On or before December 15, 2019, VTC shall submit a written report to the House and Senate Committees on Education and the State Board of Education with its findings and recommendations from the study required under subsection (a) of this section.

(2) If VTC recommends from its study that all or a portion of fully accredited VTC associate degree programs should be offered at CTE centers in Vermont, then VTC shall, in the fall 2020 semester, conduct up to two pilot programs that offer these degree programs in at least two CTE centers. If these pilot programs are conducted, on or before January 15, 2021, VTC shall submit a supplemental written report to the House and Senate Committees on Education and the State Board of Education with its findings and recommendations from the pilot programs.

* * * Workforce Training;

Vermont Training Program; Weatherization * * *

Sec. 8. VERMONT TRAINING PROGRAM; WORKFORCE TRAINING

ALLOCATIONS

(a) In an effort to promote access to training opportunities for Vermont small businesses, and to increase the resources available for employees to obtain credentials of value or apprenticeships, of the amounts appropriated to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for the Vermont Training Program in fiscal year 2020:

(1) the Agency, working in partnership with the Department of Labor to identify appropriate opportunities, shall employ its best efforts to allocate 25 percent of Program funding to provide training that results in a credential of value or apprenticeship; and

(2) the Agency shall employ its best efforts to allocate 25 percent of Program funding to provide training for businesses with 50 or fewer employees.

(b) In its annual report submitted pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 531(k) the Agency shall specifically address:

(1) whether it was able to achieve the allocations specified in subsection (a) of this section, and if not, the reasons therefor;

(2) the distribution of training funds by the number of employees of each business that benefitted from training;

(3) the distribution of training funds that resulted in an employee obtaining a credential of value or apprenticeship; and

(4) the extent to which the Program benefitted businesses with 50 or fewer employees.

Sec. 9. 10 V.S.A. § 531 is amended to read:

§ 531. THE VERMONT TRAINING PROGRAM

* * *

(d) In order to avoid duplication of programs or services and to provide the greatest return on investment from training provided under this section, the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development shall:

(1) consult with the Commissioner of Labor regarding whether the grantee has accessed, or is eligible to access, other workforce education and training resources;

(2) disburse grant funds only for training hours that have been successfully completed by employees; ~~provided that,~~ subject to the following:

(A) except for an award under an enhanced incentive for workforce training as provided in 32 V.S.A. § 3336, a grant for on-the-job training shall:

(i) for a business with 50 or fewer employees, either provide not more than 75 percent of wages for each employee in training or not more than 75 percent of trainer expense, but not both; and

(ii) for all other businesses, either provide not more than 50 percent of wages for each employee in training or not more than 50 percent of trainer expense, but not both, ~~and further provided that,~~ and

(B) training shall be performed in accordance with a training plan that defines the subject of the training, the number of training hours, and how the effectiveness of the training will be evaluated; and

(3) use funds under this section only to supplement training efforts of employers and not to replace or supplant training efforts of employers.

* * *

(k) Annually on or before January 15, the Secretary shall submit a report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs. In addition to the reporting requirements under section 540 of this title, the report shall identify:

(1) all active and completed contracts and grants;

(2) from among the following, the category the training addressed:

(A) preemployment training or other training for a new employee to begin a newly created position with the employer;

(B) preemployment training or other training for a new employee to begin in an existing position with the employer;

(C) training for an incumbent employee who, upon completion of training, assumes a newly created position with the employer;

(D) training for an incumbent employee who, upon completion of training, assumes a different position with the employer;

(E) training for an incumbent employee to upgrade skills;

(3) for the training identified in subdivision (2) of this subsection whether the training is ~~onsite~~ on-site or classroom-based;

(4) the number of employees served;

(5) the average wage by employer;

(6) any waivers granted;

(7) the identity of the employer, or, if unknown at the time of the report, the category of employer;

(8) the identity of each training provider;

(9) whether training results in a wage increase for a trainee, and the amount of increase; ~~and~~

(10) the aggregated median wage of employees invoiced for training during the reporting period;

(11) the percentage growth in wages for all wage earners in the State during the reporting period; and

(12) the number, type, and description of grants for work-based learning programs and activities awarded pursuant to subsection (e) of this section.

Sec. 10. WORKFORCE TRAINING; WEATHERIZATION

(a) In fiscal year 2020 the Office of Economic Opportunity within the Department for Children and Families shall provide grant funding to the five Home Weatherization Assistance Programs for the purpose of recruiting and training individuals in the home weatherization industry.

(b) Grantees may use the funding for:

(1) recruiting Vermonters who are eligible for funding under the federal Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act;

(2) operations for weatherization training programs, including training coordinators across the State; and

(3) stipends and wage subsidies for training participants.

(c) The Home Weatherization Assistance Programs are also encouraged to apply for the federal Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act grant funds through the Department of Labor to supplement and enhance the weatherization training programs.

(d) On or before January 15, 2020, the Departments of Labor and for Children and Families shall report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs with recommendations on best practices for recruiting, training, and retaining the weatherization workforce in this State.

Sec. 11. 16 V.S.A. § 2846 is amended to read:

§ 2846. ~~NONDEGREE~~ ADVANCEMENT GRANTS

(a) The Corporation may establish ~~grant programs~~ an advancement grant program for residents pursuing nondegree education and training opportunities who do not meet the definition of student in subdivision 2822(3) of this title, and who may not meet the requirements of this subchapter.

(b) ~~Nondegree grants~~ Advancement grants may be used at institutions that are not approved postsecondary education institutions.

(c) The Corporation may adopt rules or establish policies, procedures, standards, and forms for ~~nondegree~~ advancement grants, including the requirements for applying for and using the grants and the eligibility requirements for the institutions where the grants may be used.

Sec. 12. 10 V.S.A. § 546 is added to read:

§ 546. STATE POSTSECONDARY ATTAINMENT GOAL

(a) It is the policy of the State of Vermont to:

(1) grow awareness of postsecondary pathways and the individual and public value of continued education after high school;

(2) expand postsecondary access so that students of all ages and backgrounds can pursue postsecondary education and training;

(3) increase postsecondary success by ensuring that Vermonters have the supports they need to complete a credential of value; and

(4) maximize partnerships across and within sectors to achieve State workforce development and education goals.

(b) In order to meet workforce and labor market demands, the State of Vermont shall take steps necessary to achieve a postsecondary attainment goal that not less than 70 percent of working-age Vermonters possess a degree or credential of value, as defined by the State Workforce Development Board, by the year 2025.

* * * Adult Career and Technical Education System * * *

Sec. 13. ADULT CTE SYSTEM

(a) Findings; purpose.

(1) Findings. The General Assembly finds:

(A) Like many rural states, Vermont faces demographic realities that have resulted in an historically low unemployment rate and created obstacles for employers that seek to hire and retain enough fully trained employees.

(B) Notwithstanding this high employer demand, due to rapidly changing technology and evolving business needs, potential employees may lack the particular skills and training necessary to qualify for available jobs.

(C) In order to assist employers and employees in matching demand to requisite skills, Vermont has a broad diversity of adult workforce education and training programs offered by multiple providers, including programs administered or funded by State government, educational institutions, business and industry, and private professionals.

(2) Purpose. Consistent with the goals and purposes of 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 189, pursuant to which the State Workforce Development Board and other stakeholders are currently engaged in planning the design and implementation of a fully integrated workforce development system, it is

the purpose of the General Assembly to explore the creation of a fully integrated adult career and technical education system that:

(A) provides Vermonters throughout the State with high quality programs that are standardized, replicable, and offered with regularity and consistency;

(B) coordinates, or integrates where appropriate, the many programs and providers to maximize the efficient use of training resources; and

(C) features a governance structure that provides consistency across the system whenever appropriate, but also provides the flexibility necessary to respond to local and regional workforce demands.

(b) Adult CTE System.

(1) The Department of Labor, in collaboration with the Agency of Education, the Vermont State Colleges, and the Vermont Adult Technical Education Association, shall issue a request for proposals for consulting services, the purpose of which shall be to consider and report to the General Assembly on the design, implementation, and costs of an integrated adult career and technical education system that achieves the results specified in subdivision (a)(2) of this section.

(2) In performing his or her work, the consultant shall conduct a broad-based stakeholder engagement process to solicit input from interested parties, and State agencies and departments shall provide the consultant with necessary information and assistance within their relative areas of expertise.

(c) Report. On or before January 15, 2020 the Department of Labor shall submit a report on the work of the consultant selected and any recommendations for legislative action to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

* * * Workforce Recruitment; Military Base Recruitment * * *

Sec. 14. RELOCATION SUPPORT SYSTEM

(a) The Department of Labor shall:

(1) collaborate with key employers and nongovernmental organizations to ensure that appropriate expertise is available to program staff and individuals looking to enter Vermont's job market, through referrals or other information sharing mechanisms;

(2)(A) coordinate available information for each region that includes labor market information, housing and education information, recreation information, and other relevant resources; and

(B) make the information easily accessible for interested individuals to assist in aspects of preliminary decision making; and

(3) convene regional, multidisciplinary teams that:

(A) comprise partners with expertise from relevant sectors, including housing, transportation, education, health, child care, recreation, and economic development; and

(B) provide community-level knowledge, support, and services to best meet the needs of prospective employees.

(b) State agencies and State-funded programs shall coordinate with the Department to ensure that services and information that could assist a person in relocating to Vermont are made available through an integrated, employee-centered system.

Sec. 15. ON-BASE RECRUITMENT PILOT PROGRAM

(a) The Department of Labor shall work with the Vermont National Guard and public and private employers in health care, construction, manufacturing, business services, transportation, and human services to pilot an on-base recruitment effort that encourages service members separating from military service to relocate to Vermont.

(b) The Department shall coordinate with the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to direct available marketing and outreach funds to support targeted recruitment events held on military bases.

(c) The Department shall provide limited organizational support to employers interested in participating in private-pay travel to military bases in conjunction with other employers, representatives of the Vermont National Guard, and State officials for the purpose of promoting employment and relocation to Vermont.

(d) Not more than \$25,000.00 in General Funds may be allocated to the Department to support staff time, supplies, necessary travel, and other related costs.

(e) On or before January 15, 2020, the Department shall report to the House Committees on Commerce and Economic Development and on Appropriations and to the Senate Committees on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs and on Appropriations concerning implementation and outcomes of this pilot program.

* * * Workforce Training and Credentialing; Nurse Educators;

New Americans; Workers with Barriers to Employment * * *

Sec. 16. OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL REGULATION; REPORT

(a) The Office of Professional Regulation, in consultation with the Vermont Board of Nursing, Vermont State Colleges, the University of Vermont, Norwich University, and other interested stakeholders, shall review statutory, regulatory, and accreditation standards for nursing programs within the State and nationally with the purpose of identifying barriers to recruitment and retention of nurse educators in nursing education programs.

(b) The Office of Professional Regulation shall evaluate the appropriateness of the level of credential and experience currently required for nurse educators in clinical settings.

(c) On or before December 15, 2019, the Office of Professional Regulation shall report its findings, including recommendations for any statutory or regulatory changes to facilitate recruitment and retention of nurse faculty, to the House Committees on Commerce and Economic Development and on Government Operations and to the Senate Committees on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs and on Government Operations.

Sec. 17. STUDY; WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFUGEES, IMMIGRANTS, AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

(a) Creation. There is created a task force on workforce development opportunities for refugees, immigrants, and asylum seekers living in Vermont.

(b) Membership. The task force shall be composed of the following members:

(1) the State Refugee Coordinator;

(2) a member with expertise in new American workforce development issues appointed by the Agency of Human Services Secretary;

(3) the executive director of AALV or designee;

(4) the president of Vermont's U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants or designee;

(5) the director of CVOEO's financial futures program or designee;

(6) a representative of Burlington's Community Economic Development Office's Sustainability, Housing, and Economic Development department;

(7) two Vermont employers, one of whom is engaged in business in the agricultural sector and one of whom is engaged in business in another sector, with experience hiring and cultivating new American workers appointed by the Chair of the State Workforce Development Board;

(8) two members of Vermont's refugee, immigrant, and immigrant communities, one appointed by each of AALV and Vermont's U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants;

(9) an appointee of the University of Vermont with research expertise in refugee and New American migration in Vermont;

(10) a member appointed by the Vermont Migrant Education Project;

(11) a member appointed by the Community Asylum Seekers Project;
and

(12) a member appointed by Rutland Welcomes.

(c) Powers and duties. The task force shall study the following:

(1) recommendations identified in relevant studies and reports;

(2) cultural competency support needed in Vermont's employment settings;

(3) training, apprenticeship, and mentorship needs and opportunities;

(4) tools and supports needed for refugees to effectively apply preexisting educational and professional credentials in Vermont settings; and

(5) additional supports needed to ensure employment opportunities, including child care and transportation.

(d) Meetings.

(1) The State Refugee Coordinator shall call the first meeting of the task force to occur on or before September 1, 2019.

(2) The task force shall select a chair from among its members at the first meeting.

(3) A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

(4) The task force shall meet not more than six times and shall cease to exist on January 15, 2020.

(e) Report. On or before December 1, 2019, the task force shall report to the House Committees on Commerce and Economic Development, on Government Operations, and on Appropriations and to the Senate Committees on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs, on Government Operations, and on Appropriations concerning its findings, recommendations for proposed legislation, and investments in order of priority.

Sec. 18. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR; FIDELITY BONDS

Of the amounts appropriated to the Department of Labor in fiscal year 2020 from the Workforce Education and Training Fund, the Department shall allocate not more than \$3,000.00 to purchase fidelity bonds through the

Federal Bonding Program to provide insurance against theft or loss for insurers to hire workers with barriers to employment.

Sec. 19. REGISTRY OF EMPLOYERS

(a) The Department of Labor shall create and maintain on its website a registry of employers who accept applications and are willing to hire workers with barriers to employment, including workers in recovery from addiction and workers with past incarceration.

(b) On or before January 15, 2020, the Department shall report to the House Committees on Commerce and Economic Development and on Appropriations and to the Senate Committees on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs and on Appropriations concerning the creation of the registry and the extent the registry assisted employers and employees with barriers to employment.

Sec. 20. CORRECTIONS; WORKFORCE TRAINING

(a)(1) On or before October 10, 2019, the Department of Corrections and the Department of Labor shall execute a memorandum of understanding regarding a standardized program of education and training for all new and existing probation and parole officers that includes components related to:

(A) minimizing barriers for offenders to obtaining and maintaining employment; and

(B) minimizing the impact of program and supervision requirements on the offender's employment, including monitoring and facilitating compliance with Department of Corrections case plan goals based on best practices and consistent with public safety.

(2) The Departments shall provide written notice when the memorandum of understanding is executed to the chairs of the House Committees on Commerce and Economic Development and on Corrections and Institutions and to the Senate Committees on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs and on Institutions.

(3) The Departments shall ensure that all incumbent probation and parole officers receive the education and training under the program on or before July 1, 2020.

(b) The Department of Corrections shall collaborate with the Department of Motor Vehicles and other partners as necessary to ensure that a sentenced inmate is provided with at least one form of government-issued identification, not to include an inmate identification card, upon release from incarceration.

(c)(1) On or before August 15, 2019, the Departments of Corrections and Labor shall report to the Joint Legislative Justice Oversight Committee

concerning the Departments' progress towards developing the memorandum of understanding as required by this section.

(2) On or before December 15, 2020, the Departments of Corrections and Labor shall report to the House Committees on Commerce and Economic Development and on Corrections and Institutions and to the Senate Committees on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs and on Institutions concerning the implementation of this section.

* * * Vermont Talent Pipeline Management Project * * *

Sec. 21. VERMONT TALENT PIPELINE MANAGEMENT PROJECT

(a) The Vermont Talent Pipeline Management Project brings value to Vermont's workforce and economic development initiatives by:

(1) convening employers by sector to create industry specific partnerships and employer informed initiatives aimed at addressing skill gaps;

(2) engaging education partners to develop and align programs that meet employer and incumbent needs; and

(3) highlighting policy, practice, and funding challenges that prevent access to training or that inhibit advancement of workers within high need areas of Vermont's economy.

(b) The Vermont Talent Pipeline Management Project is encouraged to collaborate in Vermont's workforce and economic development systems by:

(1) organizing, convening, and maintaining employer collaboratives in key sectors of the economy, identified by available labor market information;

(2) broadly sharing competency and credential requirements learned from employer collaboratives, and specifically engaging training and education partners in the development of new or modification of existing programs; and

(3) using a continuous improvement process to ensure employer needs are met.

* * * International Trade and Development * * *

Sec. 22. INTERNATIONAL TRADE, EDUCATION, AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE

On or before December 15, 2019, the Agency of Commerce and Community Development shall review and report to the House Committee on Commerce and Economic Development and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs on effective mechanisms to collaborate with regional partners and form formal partnerships that will promote international trade, as well as educational and cultural

exchanges, between and among Vermont, the New England states, and foreign nations.

* * * Agency of Commerce and Community Development;
Structure and Organization * * *

Sec. 23. AGENCY OF COMMERCE AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT; STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION;
REPORT

On or before January 15, 2020, the Secretary of Commerce and Community Development shall review and report to the House Committees on Commerce and Economic Development and on Appropriations and to the Senate Committees on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs and on Appropriations concerning one or more proposals to amend the structure and organization of the Agency in order to enhance its ability to achieve its purposes and perform its duties.

* * * Ski Tramways * * *

Sec. 24. 31 V.S.A. § 707 is amended to read:

§ 707. REGISTRATION AND FEES

* * *

(e)(1) All fees collected under this section shall be credited to a special fund for the Department to be expended for carrying out its duties under this chapter and may also be expended as provided pursuant to subdivision (2) of this subsection.

(2) The Passenger Tramway Board may expend amounts that it determines to be appropriate from the special fund established pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection for the purpose of contributing to ski lift mechanic education, job training, and apprenticeship programs.

* * * State Workforce Development Board * * *

Sec. 25. 10 V.S.A. § 541a(d) is amended to read:

(d) Operation of Board.

(1) Member representation.

(A) A member of the State Board may send a designee that meets the requirements of subdivision (B) of this subdivision (1) to any State Board meeting who shall count toward a quorum and shall be allowed to vote on behalf of the Board member for whom he or she serves as a designee.

(B) Members of the State Board or their designees who represent organizations, agencies, or other entities shall be individuals with optimum

policymaking authority or relevant subject matter expertise within the organizations, agencies, or entities.

(C) The members of the Board shall represent diverse regions of the State, including urban, rural, and suburban areas.

(2) Chair. The Governor shall select a chair for the Board from among the business representatives appointed pursuant to subdivision (c)(18) of this section.

(3) Meetings. The Board shall meet at least three times annually and shall hold additional meetings upon call of the Chair.

(4) ~~Work groups; task forces~~ Committees; work groups; ad hoc committees. The Chair, in consultation with the Commissioner of Labor, may:

(A) assign one or more members or their designees to standing committees, ad hoc committees, or work groups to carry out the work of the Board; and

(B) appoint one or more ~~members of the Board, or nonmembers of the Board, or both, to one or more task forces for a discrete purpose and duration~~ to a standing committee, ad hoc committee, or work group and determine whether the individual serves as an advisory or voting member, provided that the number of voting nonmembers on a standing committee shall not exceed the number of Board members or their designees.

(5) Quorum meetings; voting.

(A) A majority of the sitting members of the Board shall constitute a quorum, and to be valid any action taken by the Board shall be authorized by a majority of the members present and voting at any regular or special meeting at which a quorum is present.

(B) The Board may permit one or more members to participate in a regular or special meeting by, or conduct the meeting through the use of, any means of communication, including an electronic, telecommunications, and video- or audio-conferencing conference telephone call, by which all members participating may simultaneously or sequentially communicate with each other during the meeting. A member participating in a meeting by this means is deemed to be present in person at the meeting.

(C) The Board shall deliver electronically the minutes for each of its meetings to each member of the Board and to the Chairs of the House Committees on Education and on Commerce and Economic Development, and to the Senate Committees on Education and on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs.

(D) The Board may adopt in its bylaws the quorum, membership, and procedural requirements for standing committees.

(6) Reimbursement.

(A) Legislative members of the Board shall be entitled to compensation and expenses as provided in 2 V.S.A. § 406.

(B) Unless otherwise compensated by his or her employer for performance of his or her duties on the Board, a nonlegislative member of the Board shall be eligible for per diem compensation of \$50.00 per day for attendance at a meeting of the Board, and for reimbursement of his or her necessary expenses, which shall be paid through funds available for that purpose under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014.

(7) Conflict of interest. A member of the Board shall not:

(A) vote on a matter under consideration by the Board:

(i) regarding the provision of services by the member, or by an entity that the member represents; or

(ii) that would provide direct financial benefit to the member or the immediate family of the member; or

(B) engage in any activity that the Governor determines constitutes a conflict of interest as specified in the State Plan required under 29 U.S.C. § 3112 or 3113.

(8) Sunshine provision. The Board shall make available to the public, on a regular basis through open meetings, information regarding the activities of the Board, including information regarding the State Plan adopted pursuant to 29 U.S.C. § 3112 or 3113 and prior to submission of the State Plan to the U.S. Secretary of Labor, information regarding membership, and, on request, minutes of formal meetings of the Board.

* * * Appropriations * * *

Sec. 26. APPROPRIATIONS

The amounts appropriated from the General Fund in Sec. B.1101(23) of H.542 (2019) for economic development initiatives shall be allocated as follows:

(1) \$450,000.00 to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development as follows:

(A) \$225,000.00 for economic development marketing pursuant to its authority in 3 V.S.A. § 2476(c) to execute the State's core Economic Development Marketing Plan through paid, owned, and earned media, utilizing technology, data, and analysis tools; and

(B) \$225,000.00 to identify, recruit, and provide relocation assistance to workers, including:

(i) identifying target audiences;
(ii) targeting through digital and social media; and
(iii) implementing strategies that convert visitors to residents and awarding grants for regional partnerships to help recruitment efforts at the local and regional levels.

(2) \$1,145,000.00 to the Department of Labor as follows:

(A) \$275,000.00 to implement a relocation support system and provide services pursuant to Sec. 14 of this act; and

(B) \$870,000.00 for workforce development and training as follows:

(i) \$350,000.00 for grants to provide weatherization training pursuant to Sec. 10 of this act;

(ii) \$50,000.00 for a grant to the Community College of Vermont to purchase equipment to provide robotics training at its Rutland location; and

(iii) \$470,000.00 to the workforce education and training fund created in 10 V.S.A. § 543 to expand opportunities for apprenticeships, training, and adult career and technical education, which may include funding to replicate in additional locations the robotics training program at the Rutland location of the Community College of Vermont.

* * * Effective Dates * * *

Sec. 27. EFFECTIVE DATES

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2019, except that Secs. 5–6 (State-owned airports) shall take effect on passage.