

## **H.533 – An act relating to workforce development**

### **Section-by-Section Summary**

(As passed Senate Economic Development)

#### **Sec. 1. VERMONT TRAINING PROGRAM; WORKFORCE TRAINING ALLOCATIONS**

(a) directs the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to allocate Vermont Training Program funding to increase by 10 percent in each of the next two years:

- (1) the number of trainees who receive a credential of value or participate in a registered apprenticeship; and
- (2) the amount of training funds provided to businesses with 50 or fewer employees.

(b) directs the Agency shall address in its annual report:

- (1) whether it was able to achieve the allocations specified in subsection (a) of this section, and if not, the reasons;
- (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. 2.** amends 10 V.S.A. § 531 to require the Agency to provide in its annual report:

- (10) the aggregated median wage of employees invoiced for training during the reporting period; and
- (11) the percentage median growth in wages for all wage earners in the State during the reporting period

**Sec. 3. WORKFORCE TRAINING; PRIORITY SECTORS**

- directs the Department of Labor to work with qualified training providers to increase the availability of training programs that lead to a credential of value in the health care, construction, manufacturing, and child care sectors, including:

(1) working with the Office of Economic Opportunity to increase weatherization opportunities;

(2) working with the Child Development Division within the Department for Children and Families in the field of early care and learning.

(3) connecting health care, long term care, and mental health providers with postsecondary education providers to expand pre-apprenticeships, registered apprenticeships, and other occupational training programs in health care.

**Sec. 4.** - renames the VSAC Nondegree Grants to become “Advancement Grants”

**Sec. 5.** Adds 10 V.S.A. § 546 to establish State policies and a postsecondary attainment goal:

(a) Policies:

(1) promote awareness of career pathways and the value of postsecondary education and training;

(2) expand access to postsecondary education and training to students of all ages;

(3) increase completion of postsecondary education and training programs by ensuring that Vermonters have the supports they need to succeed; and

(4) maximize partnerships across employment sectors to assist the State in achieving its labor force and education goals.

(b) Goal - It shall be the goal of the State of Vermont that not less than 70 percent of Vermonters will hold a credential of value by the year 2025.

**Sec. 6. POSTSECONDARY CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION SYSTEM**

- Directs the Department of Labor to design a coordinated plan for an integrated postsecondary career and technical education system and to provide a progress report and request for any necessary legislative changes to the House and Senate committees of jurisdiction, in consultation with stakeholders:

(1) the Agency of Education;

(2) the Agency of Commerce and Community Development;

(3) the Agency of Human Services;

(4) the Vermont State Colleges;

(5) the State Workforce Development Board;

(6) the Vermont Adult Technical Education Association;

- (7) the Vermont Association of Career and Technical Education Directors;
- (8) the regional development corporations;
- (9) Vermont employers and industry organizations;
- (10) the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation; and
- (11) the Vermont Superintendents Association.

**Sec. 7. MILITARY RECRUITMENT PROGRAM**

(a) Directs the Department of Labor to work with the Vermont National Guard and employers to design and implement an on-site military base and installation recruitment program that encourages service members separating from military service to relocate to Vermont.

(b) Directs the Department to coordinate with the Agency of Commerce and Community Development to support marketing and outreach for recruitment events.

**Sec. 8. OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL REGULATION; REPORT**

(a) Directs the Office of Professional Regulation, in consultation with stakeholders, to review statutory, regulatory, and accreditation standards for nursing programs to identify barriers to recruitment and retention of nurse educators in nursing education programs; and

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

(c) Report by December 15, 2019

**Sec. 9. SUPPORTING NEW AMERICANS IN THE WORKFORCE**

(a) Directs the State to take steps necessary to provide support to employers and to New Americans in the Vermont workforce:

(1) DOL - simplify the process and reduce barriers for employers seeking to access Department funding for English language classes.

(2) DOL - work with U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) Vermont to increase employers' awareness of free services available through USCRI Vermont, including on site English language classes.

(3) DOL - develop and make available to employers a collection of best practices for addressing the unique language, transportation, cultural, and other challenges New Americans face in the workforce.

(4) DOL - in collaboration with CCV or other partners - explore the development of a work readiness certificate or program for New American employees.

(5) DOL - in collaboration with the Vermont Chamber of Commerce or other partners - explore the development of a “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity” certificate or program, or similar initiative, for employers seeking to establish a New American–friendly workplace.

(6) DOL - in collaboration with the Department of Human Resources - ensure that the State’s Employee Assistance Program offers services and support that is responsive to the particular pressures and challenges facing New Americans - and share best practices with private employers that offer similar employee assistance programs.

(7) ACCD - explore whether State marketing funds should be targeted to New Americans in other states to inform them of Vermont’s inclusive workplace practices and employment opportunities.

(b) To the extent not otherwise addressed in its work pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, DOL address:

- (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.

(c) Report on or before January 15, 2020.

## **Sec. 10. CORRECTIONS; WORKFORCE TRAINING**

(a) Department of Corrections, the Department of Labor, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and the Department of Economic Development - develop an outreach strategy to provide Vermont employers with information, strategies, and best practices in hiring and retaining employees who are New Americans, in recovery from substance misuse, or have been involved with the justice system, including:

- (1) minimizing barriers for offenders to obtaining and maintaining employment;
- and
- (2) minimizing the impact of program and supervision requirements on the offender’s employment

(b) Report - December 1, 2019

**Sec. 11. NEW WORKER RELOCATION INCENTIVE PROGRAM**  
(as previously passed the Senate in S.162)

- (a) ACCD - design and implement the New Worker Relocation Incentive Program
- (b) Eligibility:
  - (1) A base grant for relocation to any area in Vermont - \$5,000.00.
  - (2) Enhanced grant for relocation to a designated labor market area - \$7,500.00.
  - (3) Applications assessed on a rolling basis with first priority, at any point in the application process, to workers in identified priority sectors, which may include health care, early child care and learning, lodging and restaurant industry, manufacturing, technology, and construction trades.
  - (4) Application for a grant beginning January 1, 2020 - paid when proof of residency and tax liability reaches the equivalent of the amount claimed.
  - (5) A remote worker may apply for a grant under the Program when all funds from the New Remote Worker Grant Program created in 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 197, Sec. 1 are encumbered.
- (c) The Agency shall:
  - (1) adopt procedures for implementing the Program;
  - (2) promote awareness of the Program
  - (3) adopt measurable goals, performance measures, and an audit strategy to assess the utilization and performance of the Program.
- (d) Definitions:
  - (1) “New worker” means an individual who:
    - (A)(i) is a full-time employee of a business with its domicile or primary place of business outside Vermont and performs the majority of his or her employment duties remotely from a home office or a coworking space located in this State; or
    - (ii) is a full-time employee of a business located in Vermont; and
    - (B) becomes a full-time resident of this State on or after January 1, 2020.
  - (2) “Qualifying expenses” mean actual costs that a new worker incurs for:
    - (A) moving expenses;
    - (B) payment of student loan debt;
    - (C) down payment assistance; and
    - (D) initial rental deposits.
- (e) Report on or before October 1, 2020:
  - (1) a description of the procedures adopted to implement the Program;
  - (2) the promotion and marketing of the Program;
  - (3) any additional recommendations for qualifying new worker expenses or qualifying workers that should be eligible under the Program, and
  - (4) any recommendations for the maximum amount of the grant.

**Sec. 12.** Amends the small business portal bill from last year, 2018 Acts and Resolves No. 196, Sec. 1, to extend the Steering Committee's work for another year

**Sec. 13. AGENCY OF COMMERCE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT; STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION; REPORT**

- Directs ACCD to submit report concerning the organization of the Agency's workforce recruitment efforts and related functions.

**Sec. 14. APPROPRIATIONS**

(a) In fiscal year 2020:

(1) \$1,725,000.00 to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development:

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

- (i) identifying target audiences;
- (ii) targeting through digital and social media;
- (iii) executing the State's core Economic Development Marketing Plan

through paid, owned, and earned media, utilizing technology, data, and analysis tools; and

(iv) implementing strategies that convert visitors to residents and awarding grants for regional partnerships to help recruitment efforts at the local and regional levels; and

(B) \$1,500,000.00 to provide incentives that assist workers and families relocating to Vermont under the New Worker Relocation Incentive Program created in Sec. 11 of this act; and

(2) \$275,000.00 to the Department of Labor to expand opportunities for apprenticeships, training, and postsecondary career and technical education through the workforce education and training fund created in 10 V.S.A. § 543 and to perform its duties pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 540(1).

(b) Of DOL WET Funds: \$70,000.00 to design a coordinated plan for an integrated postsecondary career and technical education system pursuant to Sec. 6 of this act and to provide services and support for New Americans pursuant to Sec. 9 of this act.

**Sec. 15. EFFECTIVE DATES**

The act takes effect on July 1, 2019, except that Sec. 6 (postsecondary career and technical education system) shall take effect on passage.