

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4078

To establish various programs to ease the burden on undereducated and financially deficient workers seeking to further their education.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 19, 2017

Mr. HUNTER (for himself and Mr. HASTINGS) introduced the following bill;
which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL

To establish various programs to ease the burden on undereducated and financially deficient workers seeking to further their education.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Expanding America’s
5 Workforce Act of 2017”.

6 **SEC. 2. REVIEW OF GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT MEASURE-**
7 **MENT.**

8 Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment
9 of this Act, the Secretary of Education shall prepare and
10 submit to Congress, a report on the accuracy of the man-

1 ner in which gainful employment is measured under the
2 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.)
3 for different geographic regions and courses of study.

4 **SEC. 3. SHORT-TERM WORKFORCE FEDERAL PELL GRANTS.**

5 Section 401 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20
6 U.S.C. 1070a) is amended by inserting at the end the fol-
7 lowing:

8 “(k) SHORT-TERM WORKFORCE PELL GRANTS.—

9 “(1) IN GENERAL.—For award years beginning
10 on or after July 1, 2020, the Secretary shall carry
11 out a program under which the Secretary shall
12 award Federal Pell Grants to eligible students for
13 short-term workforce programs.

14 “(2) TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—A Federal Pell
15 Grant awarded under this subsection (in this section
16 referred to as a ‘workforce Federal Pell Grant’) shall
17 have the same terms and conditions, and be awarded
18 in the same manner, as a Federal Pell Grant award-
19 ed under subsection (a), except as follows:

20 “(A) A student who is eligible to receive a
21 workforce Federal Pell Grant under this sub-
22 section is a student who—

23 “(i) has not, on or after the date that
24 is 10 years before the date on which the
25 student applies for such grant, attained a

1 baccalaureate degree or post baccalaureate
2 degree;

3 “(ii) attends an eligible institution,
4 but was not previously enrolled in an eligi-
5 ble institution on or after the date that is
6 5 years before the date on which the stu-
7 dent applies for such grant;

8 “(iii) is enrolled, or accepted for en-
9 rollment, in a short-term workforce pro-
10 gram at such institution;

11 “(iv) is determined, solely by the insti-
12 tution, that the student is unemployed or
13 underemployed; and

14 “(v) meets all other eligibility require-
15 ments for a Federal Pell Grant (except as
16 otherwise provided in this paragraph).

17 “(B) The amount of a workforce Pell
18 Grant for an eligible student shall be deter-
19 mined under subsection (b)(2)(A), except
20 that—

21 “(i) the maximum Federal Pell Grant
22 awarded under this subsection for an
23 award year shall be 50 percent of the max-
24 imum Federal Pell Grant awarded under

1 subsection (b) applicable to that award
2 year;

3 “(ii) no increase shall be calculated
4 under subsection (b)(7)(B) for a student
5 receiving workforce Pell Grant under this
6 subsection; and

7 “(iii) subsection (b)(4) shall not
8 apply.

9 “(3) INCLUSION IN TOTAL ELIGIBILITY PERIOD
10 FOR RECENT STUDENTS.—Any period during which
11 a student described in paragraph (2)(A) receives a
12 workforce Federal Pell Grant under this subsection
13 shall be included in calculating the student’s period
14 of eligibility for Federal Pell Grants under sub-
15 section (c), and any regulations under such sub-
16 section regarding students who are enrolled in an
17 undergraduate program on less than a full-time
18 basis shall similarly apply to students who are en-
19 rolled in a short-term workforce program at an eligi-
20 ble institution on less than a full-time basis.

21 “(4) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection, the fol-
22 lowing definitions apply:

23 “(A) ELIGIBLE CAREER PATHWAY PRO-
24 GRAM.—The term ‘eligible career pathway pro-
25 gram’ means a program that is a combination

1 of rigorous and high-quality education, training,
2 and other services that—

3 “(i) aligns with the skill needs of in-
4 dustries in the State or regional economy
5 involved;

6 “(ii) prepares an individual to be suc-
7 cessful in any of a full range of secondary
8 or postsecondary education options, includ-
9 ing apprenticeships registered under the
10 Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known
11 as the ‘National Apprenticeship Act’; 50
12 Stat. 664; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.);

13 “(iii) includes counseling to support
14 an individual in achieving the individual’s
15 education and career goals;

16 “(iv) includes, as appropriate, edu-
17 cation offered concurrently with and in the
18 same context as workforce preparation ac-
19 tivities and training for a specific occupa-
20 tion or occupational cluster;

21 “(v) organizes education, training,
22 and other services to meet the particular
23 needs of an individual in a manner that ac-
24 celerates the educational and career ad-

1 vancement of the individual to the extent
2 practicable; and

3 “(vi) helps an individual enter or ad-
4 vance within a specific occupation or occu-
5 pational cluster.

6 “(B) SHORT-TERM WORKFORCE PRO-
7 GRAM.—The term ‘short-term workforce pro-
8 gram’ means a career and technical education
9 program at an institution of higher education
10 that—

11 “(i) provides not less than 150 clock
12 hours of instructional time over a period of
13 not less than 8 weeks or more than 12
14 weeks;

15 “(ii) provides training aligned with
16 the requirements of employers in the State
17 or local area, which may include in-demand
18 industry sectors or occupations in the
19 State or local area, as defined under sec-
20 tion 3(23) of the Workforce Innovation
21 and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C.
22 3102(23));

23 “(iii) provides a student, upon comple-
24 tion of the program, with a recognized
25 postsecondary credential, as defined under

1 section 3(52) of the Workforce Innovation
2 and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C.
3 3102(52)), that is recognized by employers
4 in the relevant industry, including creden-
5 tials recognized by industry or sector part-
6 nerships in the State or local area where
7 the industry is located;

8 “(iv) has been determined, by the in-
9 stitution of higher education, to provide
10 academic content, an amount of instruc-
11 tional time, and a recognized postsec-
12 ondary credential that are sufficient to—

13 “(I) meet the hiring requirements
14 of potential employers; and

15 “(II) allow the students to apply
16 for any licenses or certifications that
17 may be required to be employed in the
18 field for which the job training is of-
19 fered;

20 “(v) may include integrated or basic
21 skills courses; and

22 “(vi) may be offered as part of an eli-
23 gible career pathway program.

24 “(5) SPECIAL RULE.—In the case of a career
25 pathway program being determined eligible for the

1 first time under this subsection, such determination
2 shall be made by the Secretary before such program
3 is considered to be an eligible career pathway pro-
4 gram.

5 “(6) INELIGIBILITY FOR DOUBLE BENEFITS.—
6 No student may receive both a workforce Federal
7 Pell Grant under this subsection and an additional
8 Federal Pell Grant under subsection (b)(8).”.

9 **SEC. 4. CONNECTING APPRENTICESHIPS TO ACADEMIC DE-**
10 **GREES.**

11 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title IV of the Higher Education
12 Act of 1965 is amended by inserting after section 486A
13 (20 U.S.C. 1093a) the following:

14 **“SEC. 486B. APPRENTICESHIP EXPANSION THROUGH AR-**
15 **TICULATION AGREEMENTS.**

16 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

17 “(1) APPRENTICESHIP ARTICULATION AGREE-
18 MENT.—The term ‘apprenticeship articulation agree-
19 ment’ means an agreement between or among insti-
20 tutions of higher education that specifies the college
21 credit value of and acceptability of certificates re-
22 ceived through specific apprenticeship programs, for
23 purposes of transferring such credits toward meeting
24 specific degree or program requirements.

1 “(2) APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM.—The term
2 ‘apprenticeship program’ means an apprenticeship
3 registered under the Act of August 16, 1937 (com-
4 monly known as the ‘National Apprenticeship Act’;
5 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.).

6 “(b) PROGRAM TO ENCOURAGE APPRENTICESHIP
7 ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS.—

8 “(1) PROGRAM ESTABLISHED.—The Secretary
9 shall carry out a program in cooperation with
10 States, institutions of higher education (including
11 proprietary institutions), and sponsors of apprentice-
12 ships programs, to develop, enhance, and implement
13 comprehensive apprenticeship articulation agree-
14 ments between or among such institutions. Such ap-
15 prenticeship articulation agreements shall be made
16 widely and publicly available on the websites of such
17 States, sponsors and institutions. In developing, en-
18 hancing, and implementing apprenticeship articula-
19 tion agreements, States, sponsors and institutions of
20 higher education may employ strategies, where appli-
21 cable, including—

22 “(A) improving awareness of existing ap-
23 prenticeship articulation agreements;

24 “(B) expanding participation of a wide va-
25 riety of institutions of higher education;

1 “(C) improving management systems to re-
2 garding course equivalency, transfer of credit,
3 and articulation; and

4 “(D) strategies to ensure widespread ac-
5 ceptance for the transfer of credits awarded to
6 apprentices pursuant to apprenticeship articula-
7 tion agreements.

8 “(2) COORDINATION AND TECHNICAL ASSIST-
9 ANCE.—The Secretary, in coordination with the Sec-
10 retary of Labor, shall provide technical assistance to
11 States, sponsors and institutions of higher education
12 for the purposes of developing and implementing ap-
13 prenticeship articulation agreements in accordance
14 with this subsection.”.

15 **SEC. 5. ENHANCING TRANSFER OF CREDIT AMONG**
16 **SCHOOLS.**

17 (a) TRANSFER OF CREDIT POLICIES.—Section
18 485(h)(1) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20
19 U.S.C. 1092(h)(1)) is amended—

20 (1) by striking “and” at the end of subpara-
21 graph (A); and

22 (2) by adding at the end the following:

23 “(C) an assurance that for each credit
24 earned at another institution of higher edu-
25 cation that is accepted and rejected by the in-

1 stitution, such credit will be publicly disclosed,
2 and disaggregated by type of institution at
3 which such credit was earned, accrediting agen-
4 cy or association, program, and if applicable,
5 the primary reason for the credit not being ac-
6 cepted; and

7 “(D) an assurance of the acceptance of
8 credits earned at another institution for an
9 identical course offered at the institution that
10 has been reviewed by the same accrediting
11 agency or association at both such institutions,
12 and is at the introductory level as determined
13 by the agency or association, or in a case in
14 which the transfer of such credits is initially de-
15 nied by the institution, an assurance the stu-
16 dent will have the opportunity to take an as-
17 sessment administered by the institution to
18 demonstrate competency in such course for pur-
19 poses of the transfer of such credits.”.

20 (b) ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS.—Section 486A(b)
21 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1093a)
22 is amended—

23 (1) in paragraph (1)—

1 (A) by redesignating subparagraphs (C)
2 and (D) as subparagraphs (D) and (E), respec-
3 tively; and

4 (B) by inserting after subparagraph (B)
5 the following:

6 “(C) identification of courses at each insti-
7 tution in which an articulation agreement has
8 been developed to enable the transfer of credit
9 for such courses to, at a minimum, all other in-
10 stitutions accredited by the same accrediting
11 agency or association;”;

12 (2) in paragraph (2), by striking “public”.

13 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date
14 of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Education shall
15 submit a report to Congress on a review of transfer of
16 credit policies across institutions of higher education
17 that—

18 (1) determines the extent to which articulation
19 agreements (defined in section 486A of the Higher
20 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1093a)) have re-
21 sulted in reduced costs for students; and

22 (2) provides recommendations on how to
23 incentivize the expanded use of such articulation
24 agreements.

1 **SEC. 6. COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION.**

2 Section 481(b)(4) of the Higher Education Act of
3 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1088(b)(4)) is amended to read as fol-
4 lows:

5 “(4) For the purposes of this title, the term ‘el-
6 igible program’ includes an instructional program
7 that measures knowledge, skills, and experience
8 through assessments of such knowledge, skills, or ex-
9 perience in lieu of or in addition to the use of credit
10 hours or clock hours. In the case of a program being
11 determined eligible for the first time under this
12 paragraph, such determination shall be made by the
13 Secretary before such program is considered to be
14 an eligible program.”.

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