

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5531

To amend the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to promote the employment of older individuals, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 8, 2021

Ms. NEWMAN (for herself, Mr. BEYER, Ms. BONAMICI, and Ms. GARCIA of Texas) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

A BILL

To amend the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to promote the employment of older individuals, and for other purposes.

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 “Supporting Older
5 Workers Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. INCENTIVE GRANTS AND ALLOWABLE ACTIVITIES**
2 **TO PROMOTE OLDER WORKERS.**

3 Section 134(a)(3)(A) of the Workforce Innovation
4 and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3174(a)(3)(A)) is amend-
5 ed—

6 (1) in clause (viii)—

7 (A) by striking “and” at the end of item
8 (ee);

9 (B) by adding at the end the following:

10 “(gg) programs under the
11 Older Americans Act of 1965 (42
12 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.); and”;

13 (2) in clause (xi), by inserting before the semi-
14 colon the following: “, including for such perform-
15 ance that serves individuals with barriers to employ-
16 ment”;

17 (3) by striking “and” at the end of clause (xiii);

18 (4) in clause (xiv), by striking the period and
19 inserting “; and”; and

20 (5) by adding at the end the following:

21 “(xv) supporting the development of
22 alternative, evidence-based programs and
23 other activities that enhance the choices
24 available to older individuals (including op-
25 tions for self-employment and other wage-
26 earning activities that lead to economic

1 self-sufficiency), and enhance skills (such
2 as digital literacy) in older individuals.”.

3 **SEC. 3. SPECIALIZED CENTERS; OLDER WORKERS LOCAL**
4 **AND STATE COORDINATOR GRANT PROGRAM.**

5 (a) SPECIALIZED CENTERS IN ONE-STOP DELIVERY
6 SYSTEMS.—Section 121(e)(2)(C) of the Workforce Inno-
7 vation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3151(e)(2)(C)) is
8 amended by inserting “older individuals,” after “youth,”.

9 (b) GRANT PROGRAM.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle D of title I of the
11 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29
12 U.S.C. 3221 et seq.) is amended—

13 (A) by redesignating section 172 (29
14 U.S.C. 3227) as section 173; and

15 (B) by inserting after section 171 (29
16 U.S.C. 3226) the following:

17 **“SEC. 172. OLDER WORKERS LOCAL AND STATE COORDI-**
18 **NATOR GRANT PROGRAM.**

19 “(a) AUTHORITY TO AWARD GRANTS.—From the
20 amounts appropriated to carry out this section, the Sec-
21 retary shall award grants, on a competitive basis, to States
22 and local areas to hire an older worker coordinator or co-
23 ordinators to—

24 “(1) use a person-centered approach to increase
25 recruitment, job training, and job placement for

1 older individuals throughout the State or local area,
2 including through outreach (such as through job
3 fairs for older individuals and programming) to em-
4 ployers who may hire older individuals;

5 “(2) promote coordination of available sup-
6 portive services for older individuals, including serv-
7 ices available through area agencies on aging (as de-
8 fined in section 102 of the Older Americans Act of
9 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3002)) or under the Older Ameri-
10 cans Act of 1965 42 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.), and
11 which may include coordination with labor organiza-
12 tions, community colleges, small business develop-
13 ment centers (as defined in section 3 of the Small
14 Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632)), women’s business
15 centers (described under section 29 of the Small
16 Business Act (15 U.S.C. 656)), non-profit organiza-
17 tions, community-based organizations, or community
18 centers; and

19 “(3) document and share best practices for
20 serving older workers.

21 “(b) REPORTING.—Not later than 3 years after the
22 first grant is awarded under this section, the Secretary
23 shall report to Congress on the performance in serving
24 older individuals by States and local areas with one or
25 more older worker coordinators.”.

1 (2) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of con-
2 tents of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity
3 Act is amended by striking the item relating to sec-
4 tion 172 and inserting the following:

“172. Older Workers Local and State Coordinator Grant Program.
“173. Authorization of appropriations.”.

5 **SEC. 4. OLDER WORKERS BUREAU.**

6 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the
7 Department of Labor an Older Workers Bureau.

8 (b) ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE OLDER WORK-
9 ERS BUREAU.—The President shall appoint an Assistant
10 Secretary of the Older Workers Bureau—

11 (1) to carry out the mission of the Older Work-
12 ers Bureau; and

13 (2) who shall be directed and supervised by the
14 Secretary of Labor.

15 (c) MISSION.—The mission of the Older Workers Bu-
16 reau is lead and coordinate the Federal response to ad-
17 vance employment, economic success, and well-being of
18 older individuals through policy development, research and
19 reporting, and technical assistance. The Assistant Sec-
20 retary of the Older Workers Bureau may administer
21 grants and contracts in support of such mission.

22 (d) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the estab-
23 lishment of the Older Workers Bureau, and every 2 years

1 thereafter, the Assistant Secretary of the Older Workers
2 Bureau shall submit to Congress a report that—

3 (1) catalogs Federal programs, including pro-
4 grams outside the Department of Labor, that sup-
5 port the employment, and the economic success and
6 well-being, of older individuals; and

7 (2) identifies issues affecting older individuals
8 in the workforce that may be improved with Federal
9 support and coordination.

10 **SEC. 5. GAO STUDY.**

11 Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment
12 of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States
13 shall submit to Congress a report on how accurately the
14 State and local performance accountability measures
15 under section 116 of the Workforce Innovation and Oppor-
16 tunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3141) measure the success of older
17 individuals, including older individuals who pursue self-
18 employment or bridge employment prior to retirement,
19 with a particular focus on older individuals who have addi-
20 tional barriers to employment and dislocated older individ-
21 uals.

1 **SEC. 6. OLDER INDIVIDUAL DEFINED.**

2 In this Act, the term “older individual” has the
3 meaning given the term in section 3 of the Workforce In-
4 novation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102).

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