

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3244

To amend the National Institute of Standards and Technology Act to provide support for organizations to promote the Manufacturing Skills Certification System.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 4, 2013

Ms. ESTY introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

A BILL

To amend the National Institute of Standards and Technology Act to provide support for organizations to promote the Manufacturing Skills Certification System.

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; FINDINGS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
5 “First STEP Act” or the “Supporting Training for Em-
6 ployment Potential Act”.

7 (b) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Manufacturing has been the backbone of
9 the Nation’s economy for more than a century.

1 (2) In 2012, manufacturers contributed \$1.87
2 trillion to the economy.

3 (3) More than 12 million workers are employed
4 in the manufacturing sector.

5 (4) In many sectors there is a pronounced shift
6 to high-skilled manufacturing jobs, and potential
7 employees must possess high-level skills in order to
8 compete in the job market.

9 (5) In 2011, President Obama announced an
10 expansion of the Manufacturing Skills Certification
11 System as a part of the Skills for America's Future
12 Program. The Manufacturing Skills Certification
13 System is a collaborative effort between private in-
14 dustry and the National Institute of Standards and
15 Technology to create manufacturing credentials that
16 would be universally recognizable. The credential
17 program was designed by the Manufacturing Insti-
18 tute, a non-profit arm of the National Association of
19 Manufacturers. Since its inception in 2011 more
20 than 173,000 certifications have been issued.

21 (6) Centers across the country, such as the
22 Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology, have
23 been working diligently to educate employers about
24 the value of credentials, as well as working with local
25 education centers to promote these credentials.

1 These centers bridge the gap between employers and
2 potential employees and assist in the creation and
3 retention of jobs, and highlight the importance of
4 supporting and patronizing local manufacturers and
5 businesses.

6 **SEC. 2. MANUFACTURING SKILLS CERTIFICATION SYSTEM.**

7 The National Institute of Standards and Technology
8 Act (15 U.S.C. 271 et seq.) is amended—

9 (1) by inserting after section 25 the following
10 new section:

11 **“SEC. 25A. PROMOTION OF THE MANUFACTURING SKILLS**
12 **CERTIFICATION SYSTEM.**

13 “In addition to the Centers program created under
14 section 25, the Secretary, through the Director, and if ap-
15 propriate, through other officials, shall provide support
16 and assistance to programs throughout the United States
17 in order to help those programs promote the Manufac-
18 turing Skills Certification System, including by—

19 “(1) promoting collaboration between commu-
20 nity colleges, technical schools and local businesses
21 to help such colleges and schools to better under-
22 stand the specific needs of businesses, and busi-
23 nesses to better understand the skill sets that stu-
24 dents learn in the programs offered by such colleges
25 and schools;

1 “(2) educating businesses and students about
2 the value of universally recognized credential pro-
3 grams and ultimately lead to apprenticeship oppor-
4 tunities;

5 “(3) providing support and assistance for pro-
6 grams within states looking to implement the Manu-
7 facturing Skills Certification System; and

8 “(4) providing support and assistance for pro-
9 grams to collaborate with one another at a national
10 level.”; and

11 (2) in section 25(f)(10) (15 U.S.C.
12 278k(f)(10)), by striking “2011 through 2013” and
13 inserting “2014 through 2016”.

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