

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1166

To establish a pilot grant program to support career and technical education exploration programs in middle schools and high schools.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 30, 2015

Mr. MERKLEY introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To establish a pilot grant program to support career and technical education exploration programs in middle schools and high schools.

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 “Building Under-
5 standing, Investment, Learning, and Direction Career and
6 Technical Education Act of 2015” or the “BUILD Career
7 and Technical Education Act of 2015”.

8 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

9 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) The average high school graduation rate for
2 students concentrating in career and technical edu-
3 cation programs is 93 percent.

4 (2) Students at schools with highly integrated
5 rigorous academic and career and technical edu-
6 cation programs have significantly higher achieve-
7 ment in reading, mathematics, and science than do
8 students at schools with less integrated programs.

9 (3) Four out of 5 graduates of secondary-level
10 career and technical education programs who pur-
11 sued postsecondary education after secondary school
12 had earned a credential or were still enrolled in post-
13 secondary education 2 years later.

14 (4) Eighty percent of students taking a college
15 preparatory academic curriculum with rigorous ca-
16 reer and technical education programs met college
17 and career readiness goals, compared to only 63 per-
18 cent of students taking the same academic core who
19 did not experience rigorous career and technical edu-
20 cation programs.

1 **SEC. 3. PILOT GRANT PROGRAM TO SUPPORT CAREER AND**
2 **TECHNICAL EDUCATION EXPLORATION PRO-**
3 **GRAM IN MIDDLE SCHOOLS AND HIGH**
4 **SCHOOLS.**

5 (a) **PURPOSES.**—The purposes of this Act are the fol-
6 lowing:

7 (1) To provide students with opportunities to
8 participate in career and technical education explo-
9 ration programs and to provide information on avail-
10 able career and technical education programs and
11 their impact on college and career readiness.

12 (2) To expand professional growth of, and ca-
13 reer opportunities for, students through career and
14 technical education exploration programs.

15 (3) To enhance collaboration between education
16 providers and employers.

17 (4) To develop or enhance career and technical
18 education exploration programs with ties to a career
19 and technical education program of study.

20 (5) To evaluate students' participation in co-
21 ordinated middle school and high school career and
22 technical education exploration programs.

23 (b) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this Act:

24 (1) **CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION EX-**
25 **PLORATION PROGRAM.**—The term “career and tech-
26 nical education exploration program” means a

1 course or series of courses that provides experiential
2 learning opportunities in 1 or more programs of
3 study (including after school and during the sum-
4 mer), as appropriate, and the opportunity to connect
5 experiential learning to education and career path-
6 ways that is offered to middle school students or
7 high school students, or both.

8 (2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
9 the Secretary of Education.

10 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF GRANT PROGRAM.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award
12 grants to local educational agencies to support ca-
13 reer and technical education exploration programs.

14 (2) GRANT DURATION.—Grants awarded under
15 this Act shall be 2 years in duration.

16 (3) DISTRICT CAPACITY TAKEN INTO AC-
17 COUNT.—In awarding grants under paragraph (1),
18 the Secretary shall take into account the resources
19 and capacity of each local educational agency that
20 applies for a grant.

21 (d) APPLICATIONS.—A local educational agency that
22 desires to receive a grant under this Act shall submit an
23 application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner,
24 and accompanied by such information as the Secretary
25 may require.

1 (e) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this Act,
2 the Secretary shall give priority to grant proposals that—

3 (1) demonstrate—

4 (A) that a partnership among the local
5 educational agency and business, industry,
6 labor, or institutions of higher education, where
7 appropriate to the grant project, exists and will
8 participate in carrying out grant activities
9 under this Act;

10 (B) innovative and sustainable design;

11 (C) a curriculum aligned with State di-
12 ploma requirements;

13 (D) a focus on preparing students, includ-
14 ing special populations and nontraditional stu-
15 dents, with opportunities to explore careers and
16 skills required for jobs in their State and that
17 provide high wages and are in demand;

18 (E) a method of evaluating success; and

19 (F) that the programs to be assisted with
20 grant funds are not receiving assistance under
21 the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Edu-
22 cation Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.);
23 and

24 (2) include an assurance that—

1 (A) the local educational agency will fund
2 the operational costs of the activities described
3 in this Act after the grant period expires; and

4 (B) if the local educational agency charges
5 a fee to participate in the after school and sum-
6 mer components of the career and technical
7 education exploration program to be carried out
8 by the agency, the agency will implement such
9 fee on a sliding scale according to income and
10 established in a manner that makes participa-
11 tion financially feasible for all students.

12 (f) USES OF FUNDS.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—A local educational agency
14 that receives a grant under this Act shall use the
15 grant funds to carry out any of the following:

16 (A) Leasing, purchasing, upgrading, or
17 adapting equipment related to the content of
18 career and technical education exploration pro-
19 gram activities.

20 (B) Program director, instructor, or other
21 staff expenses to coordinate or implement pro-
22 gram activities.

23 (C) Consultation services with a direct
24 alignment to the program goals.

1 (D) Support of professional development
2 programs aligned to the program goals.

3 (E) Minor remodeling, if any, necessary to
4 accommodate new equipment obtained pursuant
5 to subparagraph (A).

6 (F) Evaluating the access to career and
7 technical education exploration programs and
8 the impact such programs have on the transi-
9 tion to career and technical programs of study
10 (as described in section 122(c)(1)(A) of the
11 Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Edu-
12 cation Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2342(c)(1)(A))),
13 or other postsecondary programs of study, high
14 school completion, and the number of students
15 who earn an industry-recognized credential, as-
16 sociate's degree, bachelor's degree, or other ca-
17 reer and technical education related postsec-
18 ondary credit in addition to a high school di-
19 ploma.

20 (2) USE AND OWNERSHIP OF MATERIALS OR
21 EQUIPMENT.—Any materials or equipment pur-
22 chased with grant funds awarded under this Act
23 shall be the property of the local educational agency.

24 (3) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—A local edu-
25 cational agency that receives a grant under this Act

1 may use not more than 5 percent of the grant funds
2 for administrative costs associated with carrying out
3 activities under this Act.

4 (g) EVALUATIONS.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—A local educational agency
6 that receives a grant under this Act shall develop an
7 evaluation plan of grant activities that shall include
8 an evaluation of specific outcomes, described in
9 paragraph (2), and progress toward meeting such
10 outcomes within the timeline of the grant that shall
11 be measurable through collection of appropriate data
12 or documented through other records. Such evalua-
13 tion shall reflect the resources and capacity of the
14 local educational agency.

15 (2) OUTCOMES.—The specific outcomes shall
16 clearly address the following areas:

17 (A) The extent of student participation in
18 career and technical education exploration pro-
19 grams.

20 (B) Improved rigor in technical or aca-
21 demic content aligned to diploma requirements
22 and industry recognized technical standards.

23 (C) Improved alignment between career
24 and technical education and other courses, in-
25 cluding core academic subjects.

1 (D) The impact such programs have on the
2 transition to career and technical programs of
3 study (as described in section 122(c)(1)(A) of
4 the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Edu-
5 cation Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2342(c)(1)(A)))
6 and other postsecondary programs of study.

7 (3) SUBMISSION TO THE DEPARTMENT.—A
8 local educational agency that receives a grant under
9 this Act shall submit evaluations conducted under
10 this subsection to the Secretary.

11 (h) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—Funds received
12 under this Act shall be used to supplement, and not sup-
13 plant, funds that would otherwise be used for activities
14 authorized under this Act.

15 (i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
16 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act
17 \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 and 2017.

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