

114TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2556

To amend the Trade Act of 1974 to authorize a State to reimburse certain costs incurred by the State in providing training to workers after a petition for certification of eligibility for trade adjustment assistance has been filed, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 11, 2016

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. CASEY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance

A BILL

To amend the Trade Act of 1974 to authorize a State to reimburse certain costs incurred by the State in providing training to workers after a petition for certification of eligibility for trade adjustment assistance has been filed, 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 “Workforce Training
5 Enhancement Act of 2016”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

1 (1) The viability of the domestic steel industry
2 is crucial to the United States economy and national
3 security.

4 (2) The steel and taconite iron mining indus-
5 tries have been severely impacted by the foreign
6 dumping and overproduction of steel and are contin-
7 ually faced with unfair trade practices.

8 (3) In 2014, United States imports of steel and
9 steel products increased by 36 percent and captured
10 28 percent of the total United States steel market.
11 In 2015, United States imports of steel and steel
12 products continued to increase and captured 29 per-
13 cent of the total United States steel market.

14 (4) In 1974, Congress enacted the Trade Act of
15 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2101 et seq.), which established the
16 trade adjustment assistance program under chapter
17 2 of title II of that Act (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.) to
18 assist workers who have been adversely affected by
19 trade.

20 (5) The trade adjustment assistance program
21 provides vital benefits and services to workers whose
22 employment has been adversely affected by foreign
23 trade. Those benefits and services include education
24 and training, income support, relocation assistance,

1 job search assistance, and the health coverage tax
2 credit.

3 (6) Since the inception of the trade adjustment
4 assistance program, more than 5,000,000 United
5 States workers have been certified as eligible for
6 benefits and services under the program.

7 (7) As of September 30, 2015, the trade adjust-
8 ment assistance program had served more than
9 2,200,000 workers.

10 (8) In fiscal year 2015, the Department of
11 Labor certified 413 petitions for eligibility for the
12 trade adjustment assistance for workers program,
13 which provided access to trade adjustment assistance
14 benefits for 57,631 workers.

15 (9) In 2015, more than 13,000 new partici-
16 pants were enrolled in the trade adjustment assist-
17 ance for workers program, and the program pro-
18 vided services and benefits to more than 47,000
19 workers.

20 (10) From fiscal year 2012 through fiscal year
21 2015, the average processing time for a petition
22 under the trade adjustment assistance for workers
23 program was 49.1 days, and the average processing
24 time for fiscal year 2015 was 47.2 days.

1 (11) The trade adjustment assistance program
2 provides vital education and training services to help
3 trade-affected workers acquire new skills and pre-
4 pare for new employment.

5 (12) From 2012 through 2015, more than
6 9,800 steelworkers and iron ore miners in 17 States
7 lost their jobs as a result of increases in imports of
8 steel and steel products and were certified as eligible
9 to apply for the trade adjustment assistance pro-
10 gram.

11 (13) In fiscal year 2015, more than 6,500 steel-
12 workers were certified as eligible for trade adjust-
13 ment assistance, including workers who were laid off
14 or furloughed in 2014.

15 (14) In order to empower workers who have
16 been adversely affected by foreign trade, States
17 should have the option of providing the funding for
18 vital educational and training programs for workers
19 while their petitions for certification of eligibility for
20 trade adjustment assistance are pending.

1 **SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF STATES TO REIMBURSE CER-**
 2 **TAIN COSTS OF PROVIDING TRAINING TO**
 3 **WORKERS AFTER A PETITION FOR TRADE AD-**
 4 **JUSTMENT ASSISTANCE IS FILED.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 236(a)(6) of the Trade
 6 Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2296(a)(6)) is amended by adding
 7 at the end the following:

8 “(C)(i) If the conditions described in clause (ii) are
 9 met, a State may use the funds distributed to the State
 10 under paragraph (2) to reimburse the costs of providing
 11 training to a worker before the worker is approved for
 12 training under paragraph (1) paid by—

13 “(I) the State from funds provided by the
 14 State;

15 “(II) the State or local workforce development
 16 areas within the State from funds available under
 17 subtitle B of title I of the Workforce Innovation and
 18 Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3151 et seq.); or

19 “(III) an eligible entity under section 170 of
 20 that Act (29 U.S.C. 3225) in the State from funds
 21 available under that section.

22 “(ii) The conditions described in this clause are met
 23 if—

24 “(I) as of the date of the reimbursement under
 25 clause (i) the worker is covered by a certification for
 26 eligibility under subchapter A; and

1 “(II) the training costs of which are being reim-
2 bursed—

3 “(aa) commenced after the date on which
4 the total or partial separations of the group of
5 workers covered by the certification for eligi-
6 bility began or threatened to begin; and

7 “(bb) meet the requirements for approval
8 of training under paragraph (1).”.

9 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section
10 236(a)(4)(B) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C.
11 2296(a)(4)(B)) is amended by striking “No” and inserting
12 “Except as provided in paragraph (6)(C), no”.

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