

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5748

To rebuild the Nation’s crumbling infrastructure, transportation systems, technology and computer networks, and energy distribution systems, by strongly and urgently encouraging the immediate recruitment, employment, and on-the-job “earn as you learn” training of young African Americans who throughout history experience higher unemployment rates than any other race, which is a national crisis.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 3, 2020

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia (for himself, Ms. FUDGE, and Mr. CLEAVER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

A BILL

To rebuild the Nation’s crumbling infrastructure, transportation systems, technology and computer networks, and energy distribution systems, by strongly and urgently encouraging the immediate recruitment, employment, and on-the-job “earn as you learn” training of young African Americans who throughout history experience higher unemployment rates than any other race, which is a national crisis.

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

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Jobs, On-the-Job
3 ‘Earn-While-You-Learn’ Training, and Apprenticeships
4 for Young African-Americans Act”.

5 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.**

6 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

7 (1) Young African-American men and women
8 are the hardest hit by economic instability. Declared
9 and affirmed by the Federal Reserve, African Ameri-
10 cans face unemployment rates that are two to three
11 times higher than their White counterparts for the
12 last several decades.

13 (2) During economic recessions in 1974–75,
14 1981–82, 1990–91, and 2008, the African-American
15 community faced significantly higher unemployment
16 rates than their White counterparts.

17 (3) Even during times of economic growth, Af-
18 rican-American communities experience prolonged fi-
19 nancial vulnerability and delayed recovery. Unem-
20 ployment rates decline at a slower rate for African-
21 American men, and even a slower rate for African-
22 American women as compared to their White coun-
23 terparts.

24 (4) This extraordinarily high unemployment
25 rate has a terrible rippling impact on the breakdown

1 of the family structure, as men and women in this
2 age group are in the primary child-producing ages.

3 (5) Affirmed by the Department of Labor, di-
4 versity and inclusion within the workforce benefits
5 employees and businesses across all industries, in-
6 cluding apprenticeship programs, which provide eco-
7 nomic mobility to its participants.

8 (6) Through the combined efforts of building
9 trades unions and community partners at the State
10 and local level, there have been established more
11 than 150 apprenticeship readiness programs across
12 the United States that focus on creating pathways
13 to Registered Programs for people of color, women,
14 and veterans. Overall, from 2009 to 2019, building
15 trades unions and their signatory contractors have
16 invested over \$100,000,000 in outreach efforts tar-
17 geting under-represented communities to participate
18 in apprenticeship readiness programs. Of the 4,800
19 individuals who have successfully completed a build-
20 ing trades apprenticeship readiness program since
21 2016, 70 percent were from communities of color
22 and 22 percent were women.

23 (7) The disproportionately high-unemployment
24 rates, combined with low participation rates from
25 African Americans in registered apprenticeship pro-

1 grams not only constitute a national crisis but a na-
2 tional tragedy for the young African Americans,
3 many of whom are fathers and mothers who, without
4 jobs, are unable to provide for their families or
5 home.

6 (b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to secure
7 jobs, on-the-job training, and apprenticeships for young
8 African Americans ages 18 to 39 with the labor unions,
9 general contractors, and businesses who will rebuild the
10 Nation’s crumbling infrastructure in cities and commu-
11 nities throughout the Nation.

12 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

13 It is the sense of Congress that—

14 (1) this Act, while rebuilding the crumbling in-
15 frastructure of this great Nation, will simultaneously
16 help create good paying jobs and job training that
17 will provide young African Americans ages 18 to 39
18 with the technical skills, computer capabilities, and
19 other skills necessary in this high technology-driven
20 job market, thus providing young African Americans
21 with highly developed skills that will make them very
22 competitive and attractive to many employers;

23 (2) this Act greatly exemplifies and strengthens
24 the high nobility of purpose that is the founding
25 grace of this great Nation; and

1 (3) the African-American organizations de-
2 scribed in section 4(c) have a long and rich history
3 of working to improve the lives of African Ameri-
4 cans, and can be very helpful in successfully reach-
5 ing, contacting, and recruiting unemployed young
6 African Americans.

7 **SEC. 4. URGING EMPLOYMENT, ON-THE-JOB TRAINING, AND**
8 **APPRENTICESHIPS FOR UNEMPLOYED**
9 **YOUNG AFRICAN AMERICANS IN REBUILDING**
10 **THE NATION'S CRUMBLING INFRASTRUC-**
11 **TURE.**

12 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Labor shall
13 strongly and urgently encourage those labor unions, gen-
14 eral contractors, and businesses, who will rebuild the Na-
15 tion's crumbling infrastructure, transportation systems,
16 technology and computer networks, and energy distribu-
17 tion systems, to actively recruit, hire, train, and provide
18 apprentice programs registered under the National Ap-
19 prenticeship Act (29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.) to African Ameri-
20 cans ages 18 to 39 through their existing jobs and through
21 apprenticeships and earn-while-you-learn programs, reg-
22 istered under such Act. The Secretary shall provide assist-
23 ance to such labor unions, general contractors, and busi-
24 nesses through every means available under existing law

1 to help coordinate the recruitment of such individuals for
2 such jobs, on-the-job training, and apprenticeships.

3 (b) COORDINATION.—The jobs, on-the-job training,
4 and apprenticeships made available by labor unions, gen-
5 eral contractors, and businesses described in subsection
6 (a) shall be conducted in conjunction with the Secretary
7 of Labor and the labor unions and other associations
8 which the Secretary has identified as those primarily in-
9 volved in the infrastructure rebuilding described in such
10 subsection. Such coordination shall also be done in con-
11 junction with the National Joint Apprenticeship and
12 Training Committee.

13 (c) RECRUITMENT.—The Secretary shall coordinate
14 with labor unions, general contractors, and businesses de-
15 scribed in subsections (a) and (b) to recruit African Amer-
16 icans for the jobs, on-the-job training, and apprenticeships
17 described in subsection (a) by reaching out and seeking
18 assistance from within the African-American community,
19 churches, and civil rights organizations that can offer val-
20 uable assistance to the Secretary of Labor, the labor
21 unions, general contractors, and businesses with identi-
22 fying, locating, and contacting unemployed young African
23 Americans who want jobs, on-the-job training, and ap-
24 prenticeships.

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