

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8689

To award funds to States and local areas for public, subsidized employment programs for youth.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 27, 2020

Ms. FUDGE (for herself and Ms. KAPTUR) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To award funds to States and local areas for public, subsidized employment programs for youth.

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 “Connecting Youth to
5 Jobs Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. PURPOSE.**

7 During periods which the national rate of youth un-
8 employment is above the full youth employment rate and
9 in excess of the overall national rate, as determined by

1 the Bureau of Labor Statistics, or during a qualifying
2 emergency or economic recession (as determined by the
3 Chairman of the Federal Reserve), it is the purpose of
4 this Act to provide—

5 (1) youth public subsidized employment to as-
6 sist in State and local improvement activities, includ-
7 ing public works, the arts, and community develop-
8 ment; and

9 (2) additional and continual funding that is tar-
10 geted to high poverty areas with historically high
11 youth unemployment rates, particularly high minor-
12 ity youth unemployment rates, for the purpose of
13 creating such employment opportunities.

14 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

15 In this Act:

16 (1) **QUALIFYING EMERGENCY.**—The term
17 “qualifying emergency” means—

18 (A) a public health emergency declared by
19 the Secretary of Health and Human Services
20 pursuant to section 319 of the Public Health
21 Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d);

22 (B) an event for which the President de-
23 clared a major disaster or an emergency under
24 section 401 or 501, respectively, of the Robert

1 T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency As-
2 sistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170 and 5191); or

3 (C) a national emergency declared by the
4 President under section 201 of the National
5 Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.).

6 (2) ESEA TERMS.—The terms “local edu-
7 cational agency” and “State educational agency”
8 have the meanings given the terms in section 8101
9 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of
10 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

11 (3) HIGH-POVERTY AREA.—The term “high-
12 poverty area” means a census tract with a youth
13 poverty rate of at least 20 percent during the most
14 recent 5 consecutive years.

15 (4) HISTORICALLY HIGH YOUTH UNEMPLOY-
16 MENT LEVELS.—The term “historically high youth
17 unemployment levels” means any local area with a
18 youth unemployment rate of at least 10 percent, as
19 measured over the most recent decennial censuses,
20 or by the Bureau of Labor Statistics for the most
21 recent 5-year period for which data are available.

22 (5) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The
23 term “institution of higher education” has the
24 meaning given the term in section 101 of the Higher
25 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

1 (6) PUBLIC EDUCATION ENTITY.—The term
2 “public education entities” includes—

3 (A) a local educational agency;

4 (B) a State educational agency; or

5 (C) a public institution of higher edu-
6 cation.

7 (7) REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM.—

8 The term “registered apprenticeship programs”
9 means an apprenticeship program registered under
10 the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as
11 the “National Apprenticeship Act”; 50 Stat. 664,
12 chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.), including any re-
13 quirement, standard, or rule promulgated under
14 such Act, as such requirement, standard, or rule was
15 in effect on December 30, 2019.

16 (8) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
17 the Secretary of Labor.

18 (9) WORK-BASED LEARNING.—The term “work-
19 based learning” as the meaning given in section 3 of
20 the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education
21 Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2302).

22 (10) WIOA TERMS.—The terms “in-demand in-
23 dustry sector or occupation”, “individual with a bar-
24 rier to employment”, “in-school youth”, “local
25 area”, “local board”, “out-of-school youth”, “out-

lying area”, “recognized postsecondary credential”,
 “supportive services”, “State”, “State board”, and
 “unit of general local government” have the meanings given the terms in section 3 of the Workforce
 Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102).

TITLE I—YOUTH PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

SEC. 101. FORMULA GRANTS TO STATES AND LOCAL AREAS.

(a) FUNDING ALLOTMENTS AND ALLOCATIONS.—

(1) STATE ALLOTMENTS.—For each fiscal year during a period described in section 2, to assist States and outlying areas, and to enable States and outlying areas to assist local areas, in carrying out subsidized public employment programs described in subsection (b) for eligible youth, from the funds appropriated under section 103(1), the Secretary of Labor shall—

(A) make an allotment in accordance with section 127(b)(1)(C)(ii) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3162(b)(1)(C)(ii)) to each State that meets the requirements of section 102 or 103 of such Act (29 U.S.C. 3112, 3113); and

(B) award a grant to each outlying area that complies with the requirements of title I of

the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.) to carry out subsidized youth public employment programs for eligible individuals.

(2) WITHIN STATE ALLOCATIONS.—

(A) STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES.—Each State shall reserve 25 percent of the allotment received under paragraph (1)(A) to carry out statewide subsidized public employment programs described in subsection (b).

(B) ALLOCATIONS TO LOCAL AREAS.—A Governor of a State that receives an allotment under paragraph (1), in coordination with relevant State and local stakeholders, shall use any remaining amounts (after reserving funds under subparagraph (A)), to allocate funds to local areas, as long as not less than 65 percent of such remaining amount is allocated to—

(i) high-poverty local areas with the highest youth unemployment rate compared to other local areas in the State; and

(ii) local areas with historically high levels of youth unemployment within the State.

(b) USES OF FUNDS.—

1 (1) SUBSIDIZED PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT PRO-
2 GRAMS.—

3 (A) IN GENERAL.—Funds allotted to
4 States for statewide programs, and funds allo-
5 cated to local areas under subsection (a), shall
6 be used to carry out subsidized public employ-
7 ment programs described in paragraph (3)
8 that—

9 (i) lead to unsubsidized, full-time em-
10 ployment; or

11 (ii) provide the necessary skills and
12 competency attainment of at least 1 recog-
13 nized postsecondary credential to further
14 the education or career of youth partici-
15 pants.

16 (2) FUNDING ALLOCATIONS.—Of the funds de-
17 scribed in paragraph (1):

18 (A) Not less than 60 percent of the funds
19 for program year 2021 shall be used for wages
20 and employment benefits to individuals em-
21 ployed in subsidized public employment pro-
22 grams funded under this section.

23 (B) Not less than 30 percent of the funds
24 for program year 2021, and not less than 20
25 percent of such funds for any program year

1 thereafter, shall be used to provide career serv-
2 ices described in section 134(c)(2) of the Work-
3 force Innovation and Opportunity Act, training
4 services, or youth workforce investment activi-
5 ties.

6 (C) Any remaining funds may be used for
7 administrative and other allowable costs (such
8 as supplies, materials, equipment, and health
9 and safety resources) incurred by the State or
10 local area, as determined by the Secretary.

11 (3) CONDITIONS.—Except as otherwise deter-
12 mined by the Secretary, the following conditions
13 shall apply to each subsidized public employment
14 program funded under this section:

15 (A) Only youth residing within the State
16 or local area providing funding for the program
17 shall be employed by such program, and the
18 public services provided under such program, to
19 the extent feasible, shall be designed to benefit
20 the residents of such State or local area.

21 (B) Priority in filling jobs available under
22 such program shall be given to—

23 (i) eligible youth who is an individual
24 with a barrier to employment (including
25 youth of color, opportunity youth or out-of-

1 school youth, low-income youth, youth im-
2 pacted by the juvenile or adult criminal
3 justice systems, and underemployed
4 youth); and

5 (ii) eligible youth who are recipients of
6 public assistance (or from a family receiv-
7 ing such assistance) or who are eligible for
8 public assistance (or from a family eligible
9 for such public assistance) but not receiv-
10 ing such assistance.

11 (C) Each individual employed under such
12 program shall be a wage, which shall at least be
13 the highest of the following:

14 (i) \$12 an hour.

15 (ii) The minimum wage under the ap-
16 plicable State or local minimum wage law.

17 (iii) The prevailing rates of pay for in-
18 dividuals employed in similar occupations
19 by the same employer.

20 (iv) The minimum wage according to
21 the amendments made to section 6 of the
22 Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as pro-
23 posed by H.R. 582 (116th Congress).

24 (D) With respect to a wage determined
25 under subparagraph (C), the Secretary may

1 promulgate regulations to increase such wage
2 after consideration of industry, geographical re-
3 gion, skill requirements, and individual pro-
4 ficiency.

5 (E) An individual may self-attest to meet-
6 ing the requirements to be an eligible youth, or
7 to receive priority consideration under subpara-
8 graph (B), and verification of such eligibility
9 may occur after the individual is employed
10 under the program.

11 (F) Earnings from such program shall not
12 be regarded as income and shall not be re-
13 garded as a resource for the month of receipt
14 and the following 12 months, for purposes of
15 determining the eligibility of the participant (or
16 the participant's spouse or family) for benefits
17 or assistance, or the amount or extent of bene-
18 fits or assistance, under any Federal program
19 or under any State or local program financed in
20 whole or in part with Federal funds.

21 (G) Such program shall coordinate with
22 the workforce systems and activities promoted
23 by the State or local board to connect eligible
24 youth to educational or career opportunities.

1 (H) Such program shall establish or ex-
2 pand diversity and inclusion opportunities and
3 collect disaggregated data on related efforts.

4 (c) ELIGIBILITY.—To be an eligible youth, an indi-
5 vidual shall be an in-school youth or an out-of-school
6 youth.

7 **SEC. 102. COMPETITIVE GRANTS TO ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—From the amounts appropriated
9 under section 103(2), the Secretary shall award grants,
10 on a competitive basis, to eligible entities for activities de-
11 scribed in subsection (e).

12 (b) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this sec-
13 tion, the Secretary shall give priority to eligible entities
14 that serve eligible youth who are individuals with a barrier
15 to employment, youth of color, opportunity youth or out-
16 of-school youth, low-income youth, and youth impacted by
17 the juvenile or adult criminal justice systems.

18 (c) REQUIREMENTS ON USES OF FUNDS.—In award-
19 ing funds under this section the Secretary shall ensure the
20 following:

21 (1) DIRECT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.—Not less
22 than 40 percent of such funds are used to provide
23 direct financial assistance to eligible youth described
24 in section 101(c) to support such youth with finan-
25 cial needs with respect to entering, remaining en-

1 rolled in, and completing a subsidized public employ-
2 ment program described in section 101(b) (including
3 related costs of training, supplies, food and nutri-
4 tion, housing, transportation, child care, mental
5 health and substance abuse services, payment of
6 fines, or other targeted costs determined allowable
7 by the Secretary).

8 (2) IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTORS OR OCCU-
9 PATIONS.—Not less than 40 percent of such funds
10 are used to connect eligible youth described in sec-
11 tion 101(c) to employers for in-demand industry sec-
12 tors or occupations, work-based learning opportuni-
13 ties, registered apprenticeship programs, or to recon-
14 nect to a public education entity.

15 (3) DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ACTIVITIES.—
16 Not less than 10 percent of such funds are used for
17 promoting, creating, or expanding diversity and in-
18 clusion activities for the purposes of diversifying
19 workforce systems.

20 (d) ELIGIBLE ENTITY DEFINED.—

21 (1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity means an
22 entity that the Secretary determines to serve a high
23 number or high percentage of eligible youth who are
24 employed in a subsidized public employment pro-

grams described in section 101(b) and who are from underrepresented populations.

(2) INCLUSIONS.—An eligible entity includes—

(A) a community-based organization;

(B) a State and unit of general local government in a partnership with a community-based organization;

(C) a partnership among States and units of general local government, community-based organizations, public education entities, registered apprenticeships, and employers from in-demand industry sectors or occupations;

(D) a partnership among community-based organizations and juvenile and adult correctional facilities; or

(E) a labor organization or joint labor-management organization.

(e) USES OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity that receives a grant under this section—

(1) shall use the grant to match eligible youth to subsidized public employment programs funded under title I, and provide hands-on work experience that does not supplant the work of existing employees; and

1 (2) may use a grant received under this section
2 to carry out 1 or more of the following:

3 (A) Establish or expand diversity and in-
4 clusion opportunities and collect disaggregated
5 data on related efforts.

6 (B) Provide (directly or through partner-
7 ships) technical assistance and supportive serv-
8 ices to eligible youth and their families to help
9 navigate supportive services and other Federal
10 and State assistance programs to support the
11 recruitment, retention, and completion of a pro-
12 gram funded under title I.

13 (C) Coordinate partnerships with programs
14 funded under title I to connect eligible youth to
15 educational or career opportunities, including to
16 employers for in-demand industry sectors or oc-
17 cupations, work-based learning opportunities,
18 registered apprenticeship programs, or to recon-
19 nect to a public education entity.

20 (D) Form comprehensive youth service de-
21 livery systems to improve education and em-
22 ployment outcomes for youth and to strategi-
23 cally connect local sectors, systems, and re-
24 sources by strategically coordinating resources
25 and public, private, and nonprofit funding to

1 create youth pathways to further the education,
2 skills, and access to jobs and successful careers,
3 by—

4 (i) conducting and improving outreach
5 to underrepresented youth and families
6 with respect to the programs funded under
7 section 101;

8 (ii) making appropriate use of existing
9 education, child welfare, social services,
10 and workforce development data collection
11 systems to facilitate the entity's ability to
12 recruit youth participants; and

13 (iii) developing wide-ranging higher
14 education or employment pathways for
15 youth.

16 (E) Assist in the transition between sub-
17 sidized youth public employment programs and
18 unsubsidized employment or education.

19 (F) In the case of an eligible entity de-
20 scribed in subsection (d)(2)(D), assist in the
21 transition from incarceration with the goal of
22 reducing rates of recidivism and ensuring incar-
23 cerated youth and formerly incarcerated youth
24 have access to employment and educational op-
25 portunities.

1 **SEC. 103. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

2 There are authorized to be appropriated—

3 (1) \$30,000,000,000 to carry out section 101;

4 and

5 (2) \$10,000,000,000 to carry out section 102,

6 of which 5 percent may be used by the Secretary to

7 the build capacity to carry out such section.

8 **SEC. 104. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION, DATA COLLECTION,**
9 **AND ACCOUNTABILITY.**

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the
11 first grant is awarded under section 101, and annually
12 thereafter, each program funded under section 101 shall
13 be evaluated by the State board of the State receiving an
14 allotment under section 101 to carry out such program
15 or the local board of the local area receiving an allocation
16 under section 101 to carry out such program.

17 (b) PERFORMANCE DATA COLLECTION.—The Sec-
18 retary of Labor shall collect data on—

19 (1) the performance of each program using the
20 disaggregated indicators of performance in section
21 116(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Workforce Innovation and
22 Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3141(b)(2)(A)(i));

23 (2) the completion rates of the program;

24 (3) the rate of full-time unsubsidized employ-
25 ment after program completion;

1 (4) the rate of reconnection to public education
2 entities after program completion; and

3 (5) the diversity and equal opportunity in such
4 programs.

5 (c) ACCOUNTABILITY METRICS.—The Secretary shall
6 establish a youth work-readiness indicator.

7 **SEC. 105. REPORT TO CONGRESS.**

8 Not later than December 31, 2024, and annually
9 thereafter, the Secretary of Labor shall submit a publicly
10 available report to the Committee on Education and Labor
11 of the House of Representatives and the Committee on
12 Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate
13 that includes—

14 (1) a review and assessment of all information
15 related to the programs funded under this Act;

16 (2) any relevant guidance issued by the Sec-
17 retary with respect to such programs; and

18 (3) an analysis of equity, diversity, and inclu-
19 sion activities, best practices, and recommendations
20 for improvement with respect to increasing the suc-
21 cess of such programs and outcomes for youth, and
22 participant demographics (while maintaining privacy
23 protections), disaggregated by race, ethnicity, sex,
24 age, and subpopulations described in subparagraphs

1 (B) and (C) of section 129(a)(1) of the Workforce
2 Innovation and Opportunity Act.

3 **TITLE II—GAO REPORT**

4 **SEC. 201. GAO REPORT.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the
6 date of the published report in section 105, and every 4
7 years thereafter, the Comptroller General of the United
8 States shall conduct an independent evaluation of the ac-
9 tivities funded under this Act and submit to Congress a
10 report that shall be made publicly available.

11 (b) EVALUATION.—In conducting the evaluation
12 under subsection (a), the Comptroller General shall con-
13 sider, as applicable and appropriate, information from the
14 report under section 105.

15 (c) REPORT.—The report described in subsection (a)
16 shall review, assess, and provide recommendations, as ap-
17 propriate, on the following:

18 (1) Compliance with the requirements estab-
19 lished under this Act.

20 (2) The effectiveness of the requirements estab-
21 lished under this Act, associated challenges, and
22 trends in the youth progress made toward the goals
23 described in section 101(b)(1)(A).

24 (3) Federal guidance, best practices, and fund-
25 ing recommendations for related Federal youth em-

1 employment activities and any innovative State and
2 local actions that improve or further the education
3 or career of youth participants, including employ-
4 ment opportunities that lead to long-term, unsub-
5 sidized employment.

6 **TITLE III—YOUTH STUDENT IN-**
7 **COME EXCLUSION UNDER**
8 **THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRI-**
9 **TION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

10 **SEC. 301. YOUTH STUDENT INCOME EXCLUDED UNDER THE**
11 **FOOD AND NUTRITION ACT OF 2008.**

12 Section 5(d)(7) of the Food and Nutrition Act of
13 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2014(d)(7)) is amended by inserting be-
14 fore the semicolon at the end the following:

15 “and income earned by a household member who is
16 less than 22 years of age, who is an elementary or
17 secondary school student, and who lives with a nat-
18 ural, adoptive, or stepparent”.

○