

SENATE BILL NO. 493—COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INTERIM STUDY CONCERNING COMMUNITY COLLEGES)

MARCH 23, 2015

Referred to Committee on Education

SUMMARY—Establishes a program for awarding STEM workforce challenge grants. (BDR 34-594)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No. Effect on the State: Contains Appropriation not included in Executive Budget.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

AN ACT relating to economic development; creating the STEM Workforce Challenge Grant Fund; creating the Committee to Oversee the STEM Workforce Challenge Grant Fund; providing for the Committee to award grants from the Fund to certain consortia of community colleges and state colleges, nonprofit organizations and private businesses; authorizing the Committee to award a grant only if 100 percent of the amount of the grant is matched; making an appropriation; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

**Legislative Counsel’s Digest:**

- 1 This bill establishes a program for awarding matching grants to support the
- 2 development and implementation of programs intended to enable this State to meet
- 3 the postsecondary education and skills training needs of industries which require
- 4 workers to be educated and skilled in the academic disciplines of science,
- 5 technology, engineering and mathematics, known as STEM industries.
- 6 **Section 7** of this bill creates the STEM Workforce Challenge Grant Fund. The
- 7 Fund is administered by the Committee to Oversee the STEM Workforce Challenge
- 8 Grant Fund. **Section 8** of this bill creates the Committee and establishes its
- 9 composition.
- 10 The Committee is authorized to award matching grants from the Fund pursuant
- 11 to **section 9** of this bill. Money from a grant must be used to support the
- 12 development and implementation of programs intended to enable this State to meet
- 13 the postsecondary education and skills training needs of workers in STEM



14 industries in this State. Any regional consortium of community colleges or state  
15 colleges, nonprofit organizations and private businesses in a STEM industry  
16 operating in this State may apply for a grant from the Fund. The Committee must  
17 evaluate grant applications using criteria prescribed in **section 9** and must grade the  
18 applications on a points system. Applications providing for a community college or  
19 state college to be the lead organization in the consortium must be awarded  
20 additional points. **Section 9** also provides additional criteria which the Committee  
21 may consider when evaluating applications.

22 The Committee may award a grant from the Fund only if 100 percent of the  
23 grant is matched by money provided by any combination of private businesses and  
24 nonprofit organizations. A grant may be for not more than \$175,000 per year, and  
25 not more than \$350,000 total, for a 2-year period.

26 **Section 10** of this bill appropriates \$3,500,000 from the State General Fund to  
27 the STEM Workforce Challenge Grant Fund.

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THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN  
SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1 **Section 1.** Chapter 396 of NRS is hereby amended by adding  
2 thereto the provisions set forth as sections 2 to 9, inclusive, of this  
3 act.

4 **Sec. 2.** *As used in sections 2 to 9, inclusive, of this act, unless*  
5 *the context otherwise requires, the words and terms defined in*  
6 *sections 3, 4 and 5 of this act have the meanings ascribed to them*  
7 *in those sections.*

8 **Sec. 3.** *“Committee” means the Committee to Oversee the*  
9 *STEM Workforce Challenge Grant Fund created by section 8 of*  
10 *this act.*

11 **Sec. 4.** *“Fund” means the STEM Workforce Challenge*  
12 *Grant Fund created by section 7 of this act.*

13 **Sec. 5.** *“STEM industry” means an industry which requires*  
14 *workers who are educated and skilled in the disciplines of science,*  
15 *technology, engineering and mathematics.*

16 **Sec. 6.** *The Legislature hereby finds and declares that:*

17 1. *The STEM industries represent an important source of*  
18 *high-value economic activity in this State and quality jobs for*  
19 *Nevadans;*

20 2. *This State suffers from a critical skills gap in its workforce*  
21 *and the lack of a strong pipeline system to prepare individuals for*  
22 *careers in emerging STEM industries;*

23 3. *The enhancement of postsecondary education and skills*  
24 *training required for workers in the STEM industries must be*  
25 *encouraged; and*

26 4. *The creation of a program that enables the State to*  
27 *maximize its return on public investment in postsecondary*  
28 *education and skills training required for workers in the STEM*  
29 *industries, and to provide a strong incentive for postsecondary*



1 *education and skills training that matches the needs of labor*  
2 *markets in this State, is critical to the continued economic*  
3 *development of this State.*

4 **Sec. 7. 1. *The STEM Workforce Challenge Grant Fund is***  
5 ***hereby created.***

6 ***2. The Committee shall administer the Fund.***

7 ***3. The Fund consists of:***

8 ***(a) All money appropriated by the Legislature.***

9 ***(b) All money received from any other source for the purposes***  
10 ***of the Fund.***

11 ***4. The interest and income earned on the money in the Fund,***  
12 ***after deducting any applicable charges, must be credited to the***  
13 ***Fund.***

14 ***5. The Fund is a continuing fund, and its money does not***  
15 ***revert to the State General Fund at any time.***

16 **Sec. 8. 1. *The Committee to Oversee the STEM Workforce***  
17 ***Challenge Grant Fund is hereby created.***

18 ***2. The Committee consists of the following seven members:***

19 ***(a) Two members appointed by the Chancellor of the System.***

20 ***(b) Two members appointed by the Executive Director of the***  
21 ***Office of Economic Development.***

22 ***(c) Two members appointed by the Director of the Department***  
23 ***of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation.***

24 ***(d) One member appointed by the Governor who is a***  
25 ***representative of a qualified nonprofit collaborative that is***  
26 ***qualified pursuant to NRS 701B.921.***

27 ***3. If the Chancellor, Executive Director or Director appoints***  
28 ***himself or herself to serve on the Committee pursuant to***  
29 ***paragraph (a), (b) or (c) of subsection 2, as applicable, and is***  
30 ***unable to attend a meeting of the Committee, he or she may***  
31 ***authorize an alternate to attend the meeting on his or her behalf.***

32 ***4. Each member of the Committee:***

33 ***(a) Serves a term of 2 years;***

34 ***(b) Except as otherwise provided in paragraph (c), may be***  
35 ***reappointed by the appointing authority; and***

36 ***(c) May not serve more than 2 consecutive terms.***

37 ***5. A vacancy on the Committee must be filled by the***  
38 ***appointing authority in the same manner as the original***  
39 ***appointment.***

40 ***6. At the first regular meeting of each odd-numbered year,***  
41 ***the members of the Committee shall elect a Chair and a Vice***  
42 ***Chair by majority vote who shall serve until the next Chair or Vice***  
43 ***Chair is selected. If a vacancy occurs in the Chair, the members of***  
44 ***the Committee shall elect a member to fill the vacancy to serve for***  
45 ***the unexpired term.***



1       7. *The Committee shall meet at least once every 3 months and*  
2 *may meet at such further times as deemed necessary by the Chair.*

3       8. *A majority of the members of the Committee constitutes a*  
4 *quorum for the transaction of business, and a majority of those*  
5 *members present at any meeting is sufficient for any official*  
6 *action taken by the Committee.*

7       9. *Each member of the Committee serves without*  
8 *compensation, except that each member is entitled to receive:*

9       (a) *The per diem allowance and travel expenses provided for*  
10 *state officers and employees generally; and*

11       (b) *Reimbursement for any other actual and reasonable*  
12 *expenses incurred while performing his or her duties.*

13       **Sec. 9. 1.** *The Committee shall award grants from the*  
14 *Fund pursuant to this section.*

15       2. *Money from a grant awarded pursuant to this section must*  
16 *be used to support the development and implementation of*  
17 *programs intended to enable this State to meet the postsecondary*  
18 *education and skills training needs of workers in the STEM*  
19 *industries in this State.*

20       3. *Any regional consortium of community colleges or state*  
21 *colleges, nonprofit organizations and private businesses in a*  
22 *STEM industry operating in this State may apply for a grant*  
23 *pursuant to this section.*

24       4. *Subject to the provisions of subsection 6, the Committee*  
25 *may award a grant pursuant to this section to a consortium*  
26 *described in subsection 3 whose application:*

27       (a) *Provides a detailed description of the program, as described*  
28 *in subsection 2, to be developed and implemented by the*  
29 *consortium;*

30       (b) *Draws from data and market analysis and industry*  
31 *intelligence to identify specific current and projected workforce*  
32 *training challenges that the program described in paragraph (a) is*  
33 *intended to solve or otherwise alleviate and the manner in which*  
34 *the program will accomplish that goal;*

35       (c) *Demonstrates that the program described in paragraph (a)*  
36 *will be self-sustaining after the period for which the grant is*  
37 *provided;*

38       (d) *Designates an entity from among those in the consortium*  
39 *which will be the lead entity in implementing the program*  
40 *described in paragraph (a);*

41       (e) *Includes provisions for well-defined performance metrics*  
42 *and performance management to ensure evidence-based decision-*  
43 *making and accountability by the consortium in expending money*  
44 *from a grant in developing and implementing the program*  
45 *described in paragraph (a); and*



1       (f) Indicates the source of the matching money required by  
2 subsection 6.

3       5. The Committee shall rank applications for a grant  
4 pursuant to this section using a points system prescribed by the  
5 Committee. The points system:

6       (a) Must award additional points to an application which  
7 designates a community college or state college as the lead entity,  
8 as described in paragraph (d) of subsection 4, in implementing the  
9 program described in paragraph (a) of that subsection; and

10       (b) May award additional points to an application which:

11       (1) Identifies potential cross-sector collaborations relating  
12 to the program described in paragraph (a) of subsection 4 among  
13 applicable community colleges and state colleges, STEM industry  
14 sector councils, area businesses in STEM industries and STEM  
15 industry organizations;

16       (2) Provides evidence of current or planned participation  
17 and leadership in the development and implementation of the  
18 program described in paragraph (a) of subsection 4 by area  
19 businesses in STEM industries and STEM industry organizations;

20       (3) Allows for leveraging of any existing or additional State  
21 or federal funding;

22       (4) Demonstrates that the program described in paragraph  
23 (a) of subsection 4 is a replicable program that can be transferred  
24 to other regions in this State or other STEM industry sectors; or

25       (5) Demonstrates that the program described in paragraph  
26 (a) of subsection 4 will provide postsecondary education and skills  
27 training required for workers in STEM industries to persons who  
28 are long-term unemployed, underemployed or otherwise in need of  
29 education or training to enter a new field of employment.

30       6. The Committee may award a grant pursuant to this section  
31 only if 100 percent of the amount of the grant is matched by  
32 money provided by any combination of private businesses and  
33 nonprofit organizations.

34       7. A grant awarded pursuant to this section may be for not  
35 more than \$175,000 per year, and not more than \$350,000 total,  
36 for a 2-year period.

37       **Sec. 10.** There is hereby appropriated from the State General  
38 Fund to the STEM Workforce Challenge Grant Fund created by  
39 section 7 of this act, the sum of \$3,500,000.

40       **Sec. 11.** This act becomes effective on July 1, 2015.







