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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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SENATE BILL

No. 861 Session of  
2019

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INTRODUCED BY BLAKE, FONTANA, K. WARD, BREWSTER, COSTA, VOGEL,  
HAYWOOD, BOSCOLA, AUMENT, BROWNE AND TARTAGLIONE,  
SEPTEMBER 30, 2019

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REFERRED TO LABOR AND INDUSTRY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2019

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AN ACT

1 Establishing the Pennsylvania Career Readiness Council; and  
2 providing for its powers and duties.

3 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
4 hereby enacts as follows:

5 Section 1. Short title.

6 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Pennsylvania  
7 Career Readiness Council Act.

8 Section 2. Definitions.

9 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall  
10 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the  
11 context clearly indicates otherwise:

12 "Charter school." A charter school, regional charter school  
13 or cyber charter school established under Article XVII-A of the  
14 Public School Code of 1949.

15 "Chief school administrator." The superintendent or chief  
16 executive officer of a school district, director of an area  
17 vocational-technical school, executive director of an

1 intermediate unit or chief executive officer of a charter  
2 school, regional charter school or cyber charter school.

3 "Community college." An institution created under either of  
4 the following:

5 (1) Article XIX-A of the Public School Code of 1949.

6 (2) The act of August 24, 1963 (P.L.1132, No.484), known  
7 as the Community College Act of 1963.

8 "Council." The Pennsylvania Career Readiness Council  
9 established under this act.

10 "High-priority occupation." A job category, within selected  
11 industry clusters, that is identified by the Department of Labor  
12 and Industry as:

13 (1) being in demand by employers; and

14 (2) likely to provide family-sustaining wages.

15 "Independent institution of higher education." The term as  
16 defined under section 2001-C of the Public School Code of 1949.

17 "Intermediate unit." A geographic unit as described under  
18 Article IX-A of the Public School Code of 1949.

19 "Labor organization." As follows:

20 (1) The term as defined under section 3(f) of the act of  
21 June 1, 1937 (P.L.1168, No.294), known as the Pennsylvania  
22 Labor Relations Act.

23 (2) An "employe organization," as defined under section  
24 301(3) of the act of July 23, 1970 (P.L.563, No.195), known  
25 as the Public Employe Relations Act.

26 "Local workforce investment board." The term as defined  
27 under section 103 of the Workforce Development Act.

28 "Pennsylvania Workforce Investment Board." The Pennsylvania  
29 Workforce Investment Board established under section 301 of the  
30 Workforce Development Act.

1 "Public School Code of 1949." The act of March 10, 1949  
2 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949.

3 "Rural public school district." A public school district  
4 that has a population of less than 300 people per square mile.  
5 The term also includes an intermediate unit or area vocational-  
6 technical school if the composite data for all participating  
7 school districts meet the criteria specified under this  
8 definition.

9 "School entity." A school district, intermediate unit, area  
10 vocational-technical school or charter school.

11 "State-related institution." The Pennsylvania State  
12 University, the University of Pittsburgh, Temple University,  
13 Lincoln University and their branch campuses.

14 "State System of Higher Education." The State System of  
15 Higher Education established under Article XX-A of the Public  
16 School Code of 1949.

17 "Suburban public school district." A public school district  
18 that has a population of at least 300 people per square mile and  
19 not more than 850 people per square mile. The term also includes  
20 an intermediate unit or area vocational-technical school if the  
21 composite data for all participating school districts meet the  
22 criteria specified under this definition.

23 "Urban public school district." A public school district  
24 that has a population of more than 850 people per square mile.  
25 The term also includes an intermediate unit or area vocational-  
26 technical school if the composite data for all participating  
27 school districts meet the criteria specified under this  
28 definition.

29 "Workforce Development Act." The act of December 18, 2001  
30 (P.L.949, No.114), known as the Workforce Development Act.

1 Section 3. Pennsylvania Career Readiness Council.

2 (a) Establishment.--The Pennsylvania Career Readiness  
3 Council is established within the Department of Community and  
4 Economic Development.

5 (b) Membership.--The Pennsylvania Career Readiness Council  
6 shall consist of the following members:

7 (1) One representative of directors of a local workforce  
8 development board appointed by the Governor from a list of  
9 three qualified director representatives recommended by the  
10 Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board.

11 (2) One member of the Pennsylvania Workforce Development  
12 Board appointed by the Secretary of Labor and Industry.

13 (3) One representative of presidents of institutions of  
14 the State System of Higher Education appointed by the  
15 Governor from a list of three qualified president  
16 representatives recommended by the Chancellor of the State  
17 System of Higher Education.

18 (4) One representative of presidents of community  
19 colleges appointed by the Governor from a list of three  
20 qualified president representatives recommended by the  
21 Pennsylvania Commission for Community Colleges.

22 (5) One representative of chief school administrators  
23 appointed by the Governor from a list of three qualified  
24 chief school administrators recommended by the Pennsylvania  
25 Association of Intermediate Units.

26 (6) One member of the State Board of Education appointed  
27 by the Secretary of Education.

28 (7) One representative of public school educators  
29 appointed by the Governor from a list of three qualified  
30 educators recommended by the Pennsylvania State Education

1 Association.

2 (8) One representative of career and technical education  
3 appointed by the Governor from a list of three qualified  
4 professionals in career and technical education recommended  
5 by the Pennsylvania Association of Career and Technical  
6 Administrators.

7 (9) One representative of directors of economic  
8 development entities appointed by the Governor from a list of  
9 three qualified director representatives recommended by the  
10 Pennsylvania Economic Development Association.

11 (10) One representative of presidents of local chambers  
12 of business and industry appointed by the Governor from a  
13 list of three qualified presidents recommended by the  
14 Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry.

15 (11) Six chief executive officers in high-growth  
16 industries that collectively represent the business diversity  
17 of this Commonwealth, accounting for size, geography and  
18 industry appointed by the following:

19 (i) Two members appointed by the Governor from a  
20 list of three qualified chief executive officers  
21 recommended in a letter of interest by the staff of the  
22 council.

23 (ii) One member appointed by the President pro  
24 tempore of the Senate.

25 (iii) One member appointed by the Minority Leader of  
26 the Senate.

27 (iv) One member appointed by the Speaker of the  
28 House of Representatives.

29 (v) One member appointed by the Minority Leader of  
30 the House of Representatives.

1           (12) One representative from the Pennsylvania State  
2 Education Association appointed by the Pennsylvania State  
3 Education Association.

4           (13) One representative of school administrators  
5 appointed by the Pennsylvania School Boards Association.

6           (14) One representative of a labor organization  
7 appointed by the labor organization.

8           (15) One member appointed by the Governor who is the  
9 president of a State-related institution.

10          (16) One member appointed by the Governor who is the  
11 president of an independent institution of higher education.

12          (17) The Governor, the Secretary of Community and  
13 Economic Development, the Secretary of Education, the  
14 Secretary of Labor and Industry, the President pro tempore of  
15 the Senate, the Minority Leader of the Senate, the Speaker of  
16 the House of Representatives and the Minority Leader of the  
17 House of Representatives, who shall be ex officio members.

18          (c) Designees.--Governmental members may appoint a designee  
19 to attend and vote at meetings of the council. Each governmental  
20 member who appoints a designee shall do so by sending a letter  
21 to the chairperson stating the name of the designee.

22          (d) Terms.--The following shall apply:

23           (1) The initial terms of members appointed under  
24 subsection (b) shall be staggered as follows:

25           (i) Seven members shall serve a term of one year.

26           (ii) Seven members shall serve a term of two years.

27           (iii) Seven members shall serve a term of three  
28 years.

29           (2) The subsequent terms of members appointed under  
30 subsection (b) shall be three years.

1 (e) Vacancies.--If a vacancy on the council occurs, the  
2 appointing authority shall appoint an individual to fill the  
3 vacancy in accordance with the criteria under subsection (b).

4 (f) Executive director.--The following shall apply:

5 (1) The Governor shall nominate an individual as  
6 executive director to the council. The council shall ratify  
7 the nomination for executive director with a vote of a simple  
8 majority of the members of the council.

9 (2) The executive director may hire additional staff as  
10 necessary and as funding allows.

11 (3) The executive director may solicit funding for the  
12 operation of the council and in order to comply with  
13 subsection (k) (2).

14 (g) Council leadership.--The following shall apply:

15 (1) The Governor shall serve as the chairperson of the  
16 council.

17 (2) The Governor shall select an appointed business  
18 chief executive to serve as vice-chairperson of the council  
19 in accordance with subsection (b).

20 (h) Meetings.--The following shall apply:

21 (1) The council shall meet at the call of the  
22 chairperson, but no less than four times a year.

23 (2) The chairperson, in consultation with the vice-  
24 chairperson, shall establish the agenda for each meeting of  
25 the council.

26 (i) Quorum and official action.--The following shall apply:

27 (1) A majority of voting members of the council shall  
28 constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting business.

29 (2) The affirmative votes of a majority of voting  
30 members of the council are necessary for the council to take

1 official action.

2 (j) Reimbursement.--The members of the council may not  
3 receive a salary or per diem allowance for serving as members of  
4 the council, but shall be reimbursed for the actual and  
5 necessary expenses incurred in the performance of the members'  
6 duties.

7 (k) Funding.--

8 (1) Subject to paragraph (2), the council may receive  
9 appropriations directly or indirectly from the General  
10 Assembly, grants from the Federal Government, grants from the  
11 Commonwealth, money from private entities or any combination  
12 thereof.

13 (2) The council shall, not later than the third fiscal  
14 year that commences after the effective date of this section,  
15 operate only with funding from sources enumerated in  
16 paragraph (1), excluding appropriations from the General Fund  
17 to the council or the Department of Community and Economic  
18 Development.

19 (l) Conflict of interest.--A member of the council may not  
20 vote on a matter under consideration by the council:

21 (1) regarding the provision of services by the member or  
22 by an entity that the member represents; or

23 (2) which would provide direct financial benefit to the  
24 member or the immediate family of the member.

25 Section 4. Duties of council.

26 (a) Duties.--The council shall:

27 (1) Within 180 days of the effective date of this  
28 section, develop a vision and mission statement that makes  
29 clear the council's purpose as well as the respective roles  
30 and responsibilities of council members.



1           (2) Within one year of the effective date of this  
2 section, develop a plan in consultation with the Pennsylvania  
3 Workforce Investment Board to improve this Commonwealth's  
4 career readiness preparation system. The plan developed under  
5 this paragraph shall include, but not be limited to:

6           (i) Proposed changes to:

7               (A) improve the transition from K-12 education  
8 and postsecondary education to the workforce; and

9               (B) ensure that programs are aligned with  
10 current or anticipated business and industry needs.

11          (ii) Proposed changes, including recommended  
12 legislation and rules, to increase coordination, data  
13 sharing and communication among State, local and private  
14 agencies, groups and associations that are involved in  
15 education, job skills development and career training.

16          (iii) Proposed changes to make this Commonwealth a  
17 leader in employment opportunities related to the fields  
18 of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

19          (3) Identify appropriate information and request  
20 appropriate data disaggregated by subgroups from council  
21 members in order to make recommendations for system  
22 improvement and set goals regarding, at a minimum, the  
23 following areas:

24               (i) Availability of and access to high-quality  
25 career pathways in high-demand industry occupations  
26 spanning secondary and postsecondary education.

27               (ii) Availability of and access to high-quality  
28 work-based learning and preapprenticeship/apprenticeship  
29 opportunities.

30               (iii) Availability of and access to postsecondary

1 credit and industry-recognized credentials in high-demand  
2 occupations, especially those related to the fields of  
3 science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

4 (4) Develop a sustainable process for identifying and  
5 addressing equity gaps in the career preparation delivery  
6 system.

7 (5) Develop a sustainable process for identifying  
8 opportunities to align this Commonwealth's education and  
9 training pipeline in response to labor market needs,  
10 including, but not limited to:

11 (i) Cataloging all funding sources, including  
12 Federal, State and private, that can be utilized for  
13 education, career training and workforce preparation.

14 (ii) Reviewing funding streams for overlaps and gaps  
15 with a special focus on identifying areas with  
16 inequitable student access.

17 (iii) Developing and implementing plans to improve  
18 alignment and more effectively prepare all secondary  
19 students for postsecondary success in high-demand  
20 occupations.

21 (iv) Identifying strategies for leveraging and  
22 aligning Federal, State and private funding sources.

23 (6) Create a public repository that includes, but is not  
24 limited to, national and state model partnerships between  
25 industry and education, career pathway programs in this  
26 Commonwealth and other national and state best practices in  
27 career readiness preparation.

28 (7) Coordinate Statewide and regional conventions to:

29 (i) highlight national and state best practices;

30 (ii) connect the work within this Commonwealth; and

1 (iii) benchmark the work toward national standards.

2 (8) Develop and maintain a marketing, communications and  
3 stakeholder engagement strategy, with a website and other  
4 public materials, to be maintained by the executive director  
5 and council staff.

6 (9) Obtain input from the following:

7 (i) Employers and employer organizations located in  
8 this Commonwealth.

9 (ii) State System of Higher Education institutions,  
10 State-related institutions, community colleges and  
11 independent institutions of higher education.

12 (iii) Regional and local economic development  
13 organizations.

14 (iv) Labor organizations located in this  
15 Commonwealth.

16 (v) Individuals with expertise in career readiness  
17 preparation activities.

18 (vi) Local workforce investment boards.

19 (vii) School entities.

20 (viii) Military and veterans organizations.

21 (ix) Organizations representing women, African  
22 Americans, Latinos and other significant minority  
23 populations and having an interest in issues of  
24 particular concern to these populations.

25 (x) Any other individual or organization that a  
26 majority of the voting members of the council determines  
27 has information that is important for the council to  
28 consider.

29 (b) Report.--The council shall submit an annual report to  
30 the General Assembly, the Secretary of the Senate and the Chief

1 Clerk of the House of Representatives that details the progress  
2 made by the council according to the plan referenced under  
3 subsection (a)(2), with accompanying recommendations for further  
4 action to be taken.

5 Section 5. Notice in Pennsylvania Bulletin.

6 In the event that the council lacks sufficient funding to  
7 comply with section 3(k)(2), the executive director shall  
8 transmit notice thereof to the Legislative Reference Bureau for  
9 publication in the Pennsylvania Bulletin.

10 Section 6. Expiration.

11 This act shall expire upon publication of the notice in  
12 section 5.

13 Section 7. Effective date.

14 This act shall take effect in 60 days.