

HOUSE BILL 307

By Cepicky

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49,
relative to workforce training programs.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 8, Part 1, is amended by
adding the following as a new section:

(a) As used in this section:

(1) "Eligible program" means a workforce training program that:

(A) Has a defined curriculum, objectives, and exit skill
requirements;

(B) Culminates in a credential other than a degree, which may
include a recognized industry certification or an industry-validated
certification, but does not include a document indicating participation in or
completion of a program of professional development, continuing
education, exam preparation, or similar objectives; and

(C) Is not eligible for federal Title IV funding;

(2) "Eligible provider" means a community college or Tennessee college
of applied technology governed by the board of regents;

(3) "In-demand occupation" means an occupation for which there exists a
high demand for a trained workforce in this state based on current job openings,
hiring data, and future projections, pursuant to § 49-7-112(b); and

(4) "Quality non-degree credential" or "QNDC" means a credential, other than a degree or a diploma, the receipt of which indicates satisfactory completion of a workforce training program that:

(A) Has a defined curriculum, objectives, and results in the awarding of a credential upon successful completion;

(B) Culminates in an industry certification, registered apprenticeship, occupational licensure, or certificate but does not include participation in or completion of a program of professional development, continuing education, exam preparation, or similar objectives;

(C) Creates a pathway to other quality credentials, postsecondary degrees, or diploma programs;

(D) Qualifies an individual for an in-demand occupation; and

(E) Is not eligible for federal Title IV funding.

(b) The board of regents shall:

(1) Identify eligible programs in this state;

(2) Develop and administer a two-year pilot program to award grants to students enrolled in an eligible program and to students pursuing a QNDC;

(3) Develop an application process for students to apply for a grant administered pursuant this section; and

(4) Provide a grant to a student who meets the qualifications in subsection (c).

(c) To be eligible for a grant under this section, a student must:

(1) Be classified as a resident of this state pursuant to § 49-8-104;

(2) Apply for a grant using an application developed by the board of regents;

(3)

(A) Be admitted to an eligible program; or

(B) Be admitted to a QNDC; and

(4) Not have previously received a grant under this section.

(d) Subject to the amounts appropriated by the general assembly, the amount of a grant under this section shall not exceed the cost of tuition and mandatory fees established annually by the board of regents for regular in-state students enrolled in an eligible program or pursuing a QNDC, as applicable. Any increase in tuition and fees upon which a grant is established under this section is subject to the binding ranges of allowable percentage adjustment as approved annually by the Tennessee higher education commission pursuant to § 49-7-202(n).

(e) The pilot program established in this section begins, and grants must be awarded under this section beginning, in the 2023-2024 academic year.

(f) Throughout the pilot program, the board of regents shall collect and analyze:

(1) The number of students who:

(A) Applied for a grant under this section;

(B) Received a grant under this section;

(C) Completed an eligible program or QNDC after receiving a grant under this section; and

(D) Failed to complete an eligible program or QNDC after receiving a grant under this section;

(2) The average amount of the grants awarded under this section; and

(3) Any additional information that the board of regents determines may assist the general assembly in evaluating the effectiveness of the pilot program.

(g) The board of regents shall submit a report on the outcomes of the pilot program to the higher education commission, the education committee of the senate, and the education committees of the house of representatives no later than June 30, 2025.

(h) Subject to appropriation in the general appropriations act:

(1) The board of regents shall not use net proceeds of the state lottery to fund grants awarded pursuant to this section; and

(2) The board of regents shall only use funds appropriated from the general fund to award grants pursuant to this section.

(i) The board of regents may promulgate rules to effectuate this act. The rules must be promulgated in accordance with the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, compiled in title 4, chapter 5.

(j) This section is repealed on July 1, 2025.

SECTION 2. This act is not an appropriation of funds, and funds shall not be obligated or expended pursuant to this act unless the funds are specifically appropriated by the general appropriations act.

SECTION 3. This act takes effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.