

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5344

To require the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a grant program to address forestry workforce development needs, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 5, 2023

Mrs. CHAVEZ-DEREMER (for herself and Ms. PEREZ) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a grant program to address forestry workforce development needs, and for other purposes.

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 “Jobs in the Woods
5 Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FORESTRY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT GRANTS.**

7 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after
9 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
10 shall establish a competitive grant program to make

1 grants to eligible entities to carry out career path-
2 way training programs in eligible areas in accord-
3 ance with subsection (c).

4 (2) TERM; AMOUNT.—A grant made under this
5 section shall be—

6 (A) for a period of not greater than 4
7 years; and

8 (B) made in an amount—

9 (i) greater than or equal to \$500,000;

10 and

11 (ii) less than or equal to \$2,000,000.

12 (b) APPLICATIONS.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive a
14 grant under this section, an eligible entity shall sub-
15 mit to the Secretary an application at such time, in
16 such manner, and containing such information as
17 the Secretary may require, which shall include—

18 (A) a demonstrated capacity to carry out a
19 career pathway training program in accordance
20 with subsection (c);

21 (B) a demonstration of need for such pro-
22 gram within a region;

23 (C) a projection of the extent of reach in-
24 tended for such program;

1 (D) a plan to ensure that such program is
2 sustainable; and

3 (E) a plan for the implementation of such
4 program.

5 (2) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this
6 section, the Secretary shall give priority to eligible
7 entities that—

8 (A) propose to carry out activities to ad-
9 dress the issues of an aging workforce and
10 youth migration;

11 (B) will partner with secondary schools to
12 engage students; and

13 (C) demonstrate the ability to assist with
14 forestry workforce placement and hiring.

15 (c) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity that receives
16 a grant under this section shall use the grant funds to
17 carry out career pathway training programs with respect
18 to forestry operations and forestry products industries.

19 (d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

20 (1) CAREER PATHWAY.—The term “career
21 pathway” has the meaning given the term in section
22 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
23 (29 U.S.C. 3102).

24 (2) ELIGIBLE AREA.—The term “eligible area”
25 means—

1 (A) a nonmetropolitan area that qualifies
2 as a low-income community (as defined in sec-
3 tion 45D(e) of the Internal Revenue Code of
4 1986);

5 (B) an area that has access to or has a
6 plan to achieve broadband service (as defined in
7 section 601 of the Rural Electrification Act of
8 1936 (7 U.S.C. 950bb)); and

9 (C) an area that has a population of
10 50,000 or fewer inhabitants.

11 (3) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
12 ty” means a nonprofit organization, a State, an In-
13 dian Tribe, a local government, and an institution of
14 higher education (as defined in section 101 of the
15 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)).

16 (4) SECONDARY SCHOOL.—The term “sec-
17 ondary school” has the meaning given the term in
18 section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Edu-
19 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

20 (5) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
21 the Secretary of Agriculture.

22 (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
23 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
24 \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2024 through 2028.

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