

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1542

To establish a program that promotes reforms in workforce education and skill training for manufacturing in States and metropolitan areas, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 10, 2015

Mr. COONS (for himself and Ms. AYOTTE) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To establish a program that promotes reforms in workforce education and skill training for manufacturing in States and metropolitan areas, 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 “Manufacturing Skills
5 Act of 2015”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

8 (1) **ELIGIBLE ENTITY.**—The term “eligible enti-
9 ty” means a State or a metropolitan area.

1 (2) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The
2 term “institution of higher education” means each
3 of the following:

4 (A) An institution of higher education, as
5 defined in section 101(a) of the Higher Edu-
6 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a)).

7 (B) A postsecondary vocational institution,
8 as defined in section 102(e) of such Act (20
9 U.S.C. 1002(e)).

10 (3) MANUFACTURING SECTOR.—The term
11 “manufacturing sector” means a manufacturing sec-
12 tor classified in code 31, 32, or 33 of the most re-
13 cent version of the North American Industry Classi-
14 fication System developed under the direction of the
15 Office of Management and Budget.

16 (4) METROPOLITAN AREA.—The term “metro-
17 politan area” means a standard metropolitan statis-
18 tical area, as designated by the Director of the Of-
19 fice of Management and Budget.

20 (5) PARTNERSHIP.—The term “Partnership”
21 means the Manufacturing Skills Partnership estab-
22 lished in section 101(a).

23 (6) STATE.—The term “State” means each of
24 the several States of the United States, the Com-
25 monwealth of Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia,

1 Guam, American Samoa, the United States Virgin
2 Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern
3 Mariana Islands.

4 **TITLE I—MANUFACTURING**
5 **SKILLS PROGRAM**

6 **SEC. 101. MANUFACTURING SKILLS PROGRAM.**

7 (a) MANUFACTURING SKILLS PARTNERSHIP.—The
8 Secretary of Commerce, Secretary of Labor, Secretary of
9 Education, Secretary of Defense, and Director of the Na-
10 tional Science Foundation shall jointly establish a Manu-
11 facturing Skills Partnership consisting of the Secretaries
12 and the Director, or their representatives. The Partner-
13 ship shall—

14 (1) administer and carry out the program es-
15 tablished under this title;

16 (2) establish and publish guidelines for the re-
17 view of applications, and the criteria for selection,
18 for grants under this title; and

19 (3) submit an annual report to Congress on—

20 (A) the eligible entities that receive grants
21 under this title; and

22 (B) the progress such eligible entities have
23 made in achieving the milestones identified in
24 accordance with section 102(b)(2)(H).

25 (b) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—From amounts appropriated
2 to carry out this title, the Partnership shall award
3 grants, on a competitive basis, to eligible entities to
4 enable the eligible entities to carry out their pro-
5 posals submitted in the application under section
6 102(b)(2), in order to promote reforms in workforce
7 education and skill training for manufacturing in the
8 eligible entities.

9 (2) GRANT DURATION.—A grant awarded under
10 paragraph (1) shall be for a 3-year period, with
11 grant funds under such grant distributed annually.

12 (3) SECOND GRANTS.—If amounts are made
13 available to award grants under this title for subse-
14 quent grant periods, the Partnership may award a
15 grant to an eligible entity that previously received a
16 grant under this title after such first grant period
17 expires. The Partnership shall evaluate the perform-
18 ance of the eligible entity under the first grant in
19 determining whether to award the eligible entity a
20 second grant under this title.

21 **SEC. 102. APPLICATION AND AWARD PROCESS.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity that desires to
23 receive a grant under this title shall—

24 (1) establish a task force, consisting of leaders
25 from the public, nonprofit, and manufacturing sec-

1 tors, representatives of labor organizations, rep-
2 representatives of elementary schools and secondary
3 schools, and representatives of institutions of higher
4 education, to apply for and carry out a grant under
5 this title; and

6 (2) submit an application at such time, in such
7 manner, and containing such information as the
8 Partnership may require.

9 (b) APPLICATION CONTENTS.—The application de-
10 scribed in subsection (a)(2) shall include—

11 (1) a description of the task force that the eligi-
12 ble entity has assembled to design the proposal de-
13 scribed in paragraph (2);

14 (2) a proposal that—

15 (A) identifies, as of the date of the applica-
16 tion—

17 (i) the current strengths of the State
18 or metropolitan area represented by the el-
19 igible entity in manufacturing; and

20 (ii) areas for new growth opportuni-
21 ties in manufacturing;

22 (B) identifies, as of the date of the applica-
23 tion, manufacturing workforce and skills chal-
24 lenges preventing the eligible entity from ex-

1 panding in the areas identified under subpara-
2 graph (A)(ii), such as—

3 (i) a lack of availability of—

4 (I) strong career and technical
5 education;

6 (II) educational programs in
7 science, technology, engineering, or
8 mathematics; or

9 (III) a skills training system; or

10 (ii) an absence of customized training
11 for existing industrial businesses and sec-
12 tors;

13 (C) identifies challenges faced within the
14 manufacturing sector by underrepresented and
15 disadvantaged workers, including veterans, in
16 the State or metropolitan area represented by
17 the eligible entity;

18 (D) provides strategies, designed by the el-
19 igible entity, to address challenges identified in
20 subparagraphs (B) and (C) through tangible
21 projects and investments, with the deep and
22 sustainable involvement of manufacturing busi-
23 nesses;

24 (E) identifies and leverages innovative and
25 effective career and technical education or skills

1 training programs in the field of manufacturing
2 that are available in the eligible entity;

3 (F) leverages other Federal funds in sup-
4 port of such strategies;

5 (G) reforms State or local policies and gov-
6 ernance, as applicable, in support of such strat-
7 egies; and

8 (H) holds the eligible entity accountable,
9 on a regular basis, through a set of transparent
10 performance measures, including a timeline for
11 the grant period describing when specific mile-
12 stones and reforms will be achieved; and

13 (3) a description of the source of the matching
14 funds required under subsection (d) that the eligible
15 entity will use if selected for a grant under this title.

16 (c) AWARD BASIS.—

17 (1) SELECTION BASIS AND MAXIMUM NUMBER
18 OF GRANTS.—

19 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Partnership shall
20 award grants under this title, by not earlier
21 than January 1, 2016, and not later than
22 March 31, 2016, to the eligible entities that
23 submit the strongest and most comprehensive
24 proposals under subsection (b)(2).

1 (B) MAXIMUM NUMBER OF GRANTS.—For
2 any grant period, the Partnership shall award
3 not more than 5 grants under this title to eligi-
4 ble entities representing States and not more
5 than 5 grants to eligible entities representing
6 metropolitan areas.

7 (2) AMOUNT OF GRANTS.—

8 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Partnership shall
9 award grants under this title in an amount that
10 averages, for all grants issued for a 3-year
11 grant period, \$10,000,000 for each year, sub-
12 ject to subparagraph (C) and paragraph (3).

13 (B) AMOUNT.—In determining the amount
14 of each grant for an eligible entity, the Partner-
15 ship shall take into consideration the size of the
16 industrial base of the eligible entity.

17 (C) INSUFFICIENT APPROPRIATIONS.—For
18 any grant period for which the amounts avail-
19 able to carry out this title are insufficient to
20 award grants in the amount described in sub-
21 paragraph (A), the Partnership shall award
22 grants in amounts determined appropriate by
23 the Partnership.

24 (3) FUNDING CONTINGENT ON PERFORM-
25 ANCE.—In order for an eligible entity to receive

1 funds under a grant under this title for the second
2 or third year of the grant period, the eligible entity
3 shall demonstrate to the Partnership that the eligi-
4 ble entity has achieved the specific reforms and mile-
5 stones required under the timeline included in the el-
6 igible entity's proposal under subsection (b)(2)(H).

7 (4) CONSULTATION WITH POLICY EXPERTS.—
8 The Partnership shall assemble a panel of manufac-
9 turing policy experts and manufacturing leaders
10 from the private sector to serve in an advisory ca-
11 pacity in helping to oversee the competition and re-
12 view the competition's effectiveness.

13 (d) MATCHING FUNDS.—An eligible entity receiving
14 a grant under this title shall provide matching funds to-
15 ward the grant in an amount of not less than 50 percent
16 of the costs of the activities carried out under the grant.
17 Matching funds under this subsection shall be from non-
18 Federal sources and shall be in cash or in-kind.

19 **SEC. 103. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

20 (a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appro-
21 priated to carry out this title such sums as may be nec-
22 essary for fiscal year 2016.

23 (b) AVAILABILITY.—Funds appropriated under this
24 section shall remain available until expended.

1 **TITLE II—AUDIT OF FEDERAL**
2 **EDUCATION AND SKILLS**
3 **TRAINING**

4 **SEC. 201. AUDIT OF FEDERAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS**
5 **TRAINING.**

6 (a) **AUDIT.**—By not later than March 31, 2016, the
7 Director of the National Institute of Standards and Tech-
8 nology, acting through the Advanced Manufacturing Na-
9 tional Program Office, shall conduct an audit of all Fed-
10 eral education and skills training programs related to
11 manufacturing to ensure that States and metropolitan
12 areas are able to align Federal resources to the greatest
13 extent possible with the labor demands of their primary
14 manufacturing industries. In carrying out the audit, the
15 Director shall work with States and metropolitan areas to
16 determine how Federal funds can be more tailored to meet
17 their different needs.

18 (b) **REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**—By not later
19 than March 31, 2016, the Director of the National Insti-
20 tute of Standards and Technology shall prepare and sub-
21 mit a report to Congress that includes—

22 (1) a summary of the findings from the audit
23 conducted under subsection (a); and

24 (2) recommendations for such legislative and
25 administrative actions to reform the existing funding

1 for Federal education and skills training programs
2 related to manufacturing as the Director determines
3 appropriate.

4 **TITLE III—OFFSET**

5 **SEC. 301. RESCISSION OF DEPARTMENT OF LABOR FUNDS.**

6 (a) RESCISSION OF FUNDS.—Notwithstanding any
7 other provision of law, an amount equal to the amount
8 of funds made available to carry out title I for a fiscal
9 year shall be rescinded, in accordance with subsection (b),
10 from the unobligated discretionary funds available to the
11 Secretary from prior fiscal years.

12 (b) RETURN OF FUNDS.—Notwithstanding any other
13 provision of law, by not later than 15 days after funds
14 are appropriated or made available to carry out title I,
15 the Director of the Office of Management and Budget
16 shall—

17 (1) identify from which appropriations accounts
18 available to the Secretary of Labor the rescission de-
19 scribed in subsection (a) shall apply; and

20 (2) determine the amount of the rescission that
21 shall apply to each account.

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