

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 8051

To ensure that qualified technical schools offering certain career pathway and job training programs have the same access to Federal grants as 2-year and 4-year institutions of higher education, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 24, 2026

Mr. KENNEDY of Utah (for himself and Mr. OWENS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Workforce

A BILL

To ensure that qualified technical schools offering certain career pathway and job training programs have the same access to Federal grants as 2-year and 4-year institutions of higher education, 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 “Transforming Edu-
5 cation through College and Hands-On Training Act” or
6 the “TECH Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. MODIFICATION TO ELIGIBILITY FOR CERTAIN FED-**
2 **ERAL GRANT PROGRAMS.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provi-
4 sion of law, a qualified technical school shall be eligible
5 to participate in any covered Federal grant program to
6 the same extent, and on the same basis, as any 2-year
7 or 4-year institution of higher education.

8 (b) AGENCY ACTION.—Not later than 180 days after
9 the date of enactment of this Act, each Secretary con-
10 cerned shall—

11 (1) modify the eligibility criteria and application
12 procedures for the covered Federal grant programs
13 under the jurisdiction of such Secretary, as nec-
14 essary, to ensure that qualified technical schools are
15 eligible to participate in the program to the same ex-
16 tent, and on the same basis, as 2-year and 4-year
17 institutions of higher education, as required under
18 subsection (a); and

19 (2) issue guidance that specifies how grants
20 under such program should be dispersed among
21 qualified technical schools and 2-year and 4-year in-
22 stitutions of higher education to ensure that the sec-
23 tors and occupations described in subsection
24 (c)(4)(A)(ii) have an adequate workforce pipeline to
25 replace the aging and retiring current employees.

26 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1 (1) 2-YEAR OR 4-YEAR INSTITUTION OF HIGHER
2 EDUCATION.—The term “2-year or 4-year institution
3 of higher education” means an institution described
4 in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of
5 1965 (20 U.S.C 1001(a)).

6 (2) COVERED FEDERAL GRANT PROGRAM.—The
7 term “covered Federal grant program” means the
8 following:

9 (A) Grants made by the Department of
10 Education under—

11 (i) the Strengthening Institutions Pro-
12 gram authorized under part A of title III
13 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20
14 U.S.C. 1057 et seq.);

15 (ii) the Federal TRIO Program au-
16 thorized under chapter 1 of subpart 2 of
17 part A of title IV of the Higher Education
18 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 20 U.S.C. 1070a–
19 11 et seq.); and

20 (iii) the Child Care Access Means
21 Parents in School Program (commonly
22 known as the “CCAMPIS Program”) au-
23 thorized under section 419N of the Higher
24 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070e).

1 (B) Grants made by the Department of
2 Labor under the Strengthening Community
3 Colleges Training Grants Program authorized
4 under the Workforce Innovation and Oppor-
5 tunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.).

6 (3) ELIGIBLE CAREER PATHWAY PROGRAM.—
7 The term “eligible career pathway program” means
8 a program that—

9 (A) meets the requirements of section
10 484(d)(2) of the Higher Education Act of 1965
11 (20 U.S.C. 1091(d)(2));

12 (B) is listed on the provider list under sec-
13 tion 122(d) of the Workforce Innovation and
14 Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3152(d));

15 (C) is part of a career pathway, as defined
16 in section 3 of that Act (29 U.S.C. 3102); and

17 (D) is aligned to a program of study as de-
18 fined in section 3 of the Carl D. Perkins Career
19 and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20
20 U.S.C. 2302).

21 (4) ELIGIBLE JOB TRAINING PROGRAM.—

22 (A) IN GENERAL.—The term “eligible job
23 training program” means a career and technical
24 education program at qualified technical school
25 that—

1 (i) is a program of at least 150 clock
2 hours of instruction, but less than 600
3 clock hours of instruction, or an equivalent
4 number of credit hours, offered by a quali-
5 fied technical school during a minimum of
6 8 weeks, but less than 15 weeks;

7 (ii) provides training that is—

8 (I) in a sector or occupation de-
9 termined by the Secretary concerned
10 to be essential for national security,
11 public safety, supply chain security,
12 transportation, critical manufacturing
13 or infrastructure, healthcare, or public
14 health; and

15 (II) aligned with the require-
16 ments of high-skill, high-wage, or in-
17 demand industry sectors or occupa-
18 tions in the State or local area, as de-
19 termined by an industry or sector
20 partnership;

21 (iii) is a program of training services,
22 and provided through an eligible training
23 provider, as described under section 122(d)
24 of the Workforce Innovation and Oppor-
25 tunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3152(d));

1 (iv) provides a student, upon comple-
2 tion of the program, with a recognized
3 postsecondary credential that is recognized
4 by employers in the relevant industry, in-
5 cluding credentials recognized by industry
6 or sector partnerships in the relevant in-
7 dustry in the State or local area where the
8 industry is located and the job training
9 program is provided;

10 (v) has been determined by the school
11 (after validation of that determination by
12 an industry or sector partnership) to pro-
13 vide academic content, an amount of in-
14 structional time, and a recognized postsec-
15 ondary credential that are sufficient to—

16 (I) meet the hiring requirements
17 of potential employers; and

18 (II) satisfy any applicable edu-
19 cational prerequisite requirement for
20 professional licensure or certification,
21 so that the student who completes the
22 program and seeks employment quali-
23 fies to take any licensure or certifi-
24 cation examination needed to practice
25 or find employment in an occupation

1 that the program prepares students to
2 enter;

3 (vi) may include integrated education
4 and training;

5 (vii) may be offered as part of an eli-
6 gible career pathway program; and

7 (viii) does not exceed by more than 50
8 percent the minimum number of clock
9 hours required for training if the State has
10 established such a requirement.

11 (B) APPROVAL BY THE SECRETARY.—In
12 the case of a program that is seeking to estab-
13 lish eligibility as an eligible job training pro-
14 gram under this paragraph, the Secretary of
15 Education shall make a determination about
16 whether the program meets the requirements of
17 this paragraph not more than 60 days after the
18 date on which such program is submitted for
19 consideration as an eligible job training pro-
20 gram.

21 (C) ADDITIONAL ASSURANCE.—The Sec-
22 retary of Education shall not determine that a
23 program is an eligible job training program in
24 accordance with subparagraph (B) unless the
25 Secretary receives a certification from the ap-

1 appropriate State board containing an assurance
2 that the program meets the requirements of
3 subparagraph (A).

4 (5) QUALIFIED TECHNICAL SCHOOL.—The term
5 “qualified technical school” means a postsecondary
6 vocational institution (as defined in section 102(c) of
7 the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
8 1002(c)) that—

9 (A) offers an eligible career pathway pro-
10 gram or an eligible job training program; and

11 (B) is located in the United States.

12 (6) SECRETARY CONCERNED.—The term “Sec-
13 retary concerned” means—

14 (A) the Secretary of Education, with re-
15 spect to covered Federal grant programs ad-
16 ministered by the Department of Education;
17 and

18 (B) the Secretary of Labor, with respect to
19 a covered Federal grant programs administered
20 by the Department of Labor.

21 (7) WIOA TERMS.—The terms “industry or
22 sector partnership”, “in-demand industry sector or
23 occupation”, “recognized postsecondary credential”,
24 and “State board” have the meanings given such

- 1 terms in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and
- 2 Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102).

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