

119TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. R. 8196

To amend the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to add the
Workforce data quality initiative.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 6, 2026

Mr. BAUMGARTNER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Education and Workforce

A BILL

To amend the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
to add the Workforce data quality initiative.

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 “Workforce Data Qual-
5 ity Initiative Act of 2026”.

6 **SEC. 2. WORKFORCE DATA QUALITY INITIATIVE.**

7 (a) RESERVATIONS OF FUNDS FOR WORKFORCE
8 DATA QUALITY INITIATIVE.—Section 132(a)(2)(A) of the
9 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C.
10 3172(a)(2)(A)) is amended by—

1 (1) striking “, 169(e) (relating to dislocated
2 worker projects),”; and

3 (2) by inserting “, and under subsections (c)
4 (relating to dislocated worker projects) and (d) (re-
5 lating to workforce data quality initiatives) of sec-
6 tion 169” before “; and”.

7 (b) WORKFORCE DATA QUALITY INITIATIVE.—Sec-
8 tion 169 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
9 (29 U.S.C. 3224) is amended by adding at the end the
10 following:

11 “(d) WORKFORCE DATA QUALITY INITIATIVE.—

12 “(1) GRANT PROGRAM.—Of amount made avail-
13 able pursuant to section 132(a)(2)(A) for any pro-
14 gram year, the Secretary shall use not less than 5
15 percent and not more than 10 percent of such
16 amount, and may also use funds appropriated under
17 section 172(d) for purposes of carrying out this sec-
18 tion, to award grants to eligible entities to create
19 workforce longitudinal data systems and associated
20 resources for the purposes of strengthening program
21 quality, building State capacity to produce evidence
22 for decision-making, meeting performance reporting
23 requirements, protecting privacy, and improving
24 transparency.

1 “(2) APPLICATION.—To be eligible to receive a
2 grant under this subsection, an eligible entity shall
3 submit an application to the Secretary at such time
4 and in such manner as the Secretary may require,
5 which shall include—

6 “(A) a description of the proposed activi-
7 ties that will be conducted by the eligible entity,
8 including a description of the need for such ac-
9 tivities and a detailed budget for such activities;

10 “(B) a description of the expected out-
11 comes and outputs (such as systems or prod-
12 ucts) that will result from the proposed activi-
13 ties and the proposed uses of such outputs;

14 “(C) a description of how the proposed ac-
15 tivities will—

16 “(i) support the reporting of perform-
17 ance data, including employment and earn-
18 ings outcomes, for the performance ac-
19 countability requirements under section
20 116, including outcomes for eligible pro-
21 viders of training services;

22 “(ii) improve workforce data stand-
23 ardization across programs in the State;
24 and

1 “(iii) improve the collection, accuracy,
2 timeliness, and usability of real-time, econ-
3 omy-wide data on new and emerging skills
4 and in-demand occupational roles;

5 “(D) a description of the methods and pro-
6 cedures the eligible entity will use to ensure the
7 security and privacy of the collection, storage,
8 and use of all data involved in the systems and
9 resources supported through the grant, includ-
10 ing compliance with State and Federal privacy
11 and confidentiality statutes and regulations;
12 and

13 “(E) a plan for how the eligible entity will
14 continue the activities or sustain the use of the
15 outputs created with the grant funds after the
16 grant period ends.

17 “(3) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under the
18 subsection, the Secretary shall give priority to—

19 “(A) eligible entities that are—

20 “(i) a State agency of a State that
21 has not previously received a grant from
22 the Secretary for the purposes of this sub-
23 section and demonstrates a substantial
24 need to improve its data infrastructure; or

1 “(ii) a consortium of State agencies
2 that is comprised of State agencies from
3 multiple States and includes at least one
4 State agency described in clause (i) and
5 has the capacity to make significant con-
6 tributions toward building interoperable,
7 cross-State data infrastructure; and

8 “(B) eligible entities that will use grant
9 funds to—

10 “(i) expand the adoption and use of
11 linked, open, and interoperable data on
12 credentials, including through the develop-
13 ment of a credential registry or other tools
14 and services designed to help learners and
15 workers make informed decisions, such as
16 a credential navigation feature that allows
17 participants and the public to search a list
18 of recognized post-secondary credentials of-
19 fered by eligible providers of training serv-
20 ices under section 122;

21 “(ii) participate in and contribute
22 data to a multistate data collaborative, in-
23 cluding data that provide participating
24 States the ability to better understand—

1 “(I) earnings and employment
2 outcomes of individuals who work out-
3 of-State; and

4 “(II) cross-State earnings and
5 employment trends;

6 “(iii) enhance collaboration with pri-
7 vate sector workforce and labor market
8 data entities and the end-users of work-
9 force and labor market data, including in-
10 dividuals, employers, economic development
11 agencies, and workforce development pro-
12 viders;

13 “(iv) leverage the use of non-Federal
14 contributions to improve workforce data in-
15 frastructure, including staff capacity build-
16 ing; or

17 “(v) expand existing statewide inte-
18 grated longitudinal data systems, including
19 such systems receiving assistance under
20 section 208 of the Educational Technical
21 Assistance Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C. 9607).

22 “(4) USE OF FUNDS.—In addition to the activi-
23 ties described in paragraph (3)(B), an eligible entity
24 awarded a grant under this subsection may use
25 funds to carry out any of the following activities:

1 “(A) Developing or enhancing a State’s
2 workforce longitudinal data system, including
3 by participating and contributing data to the
4 State’s data system, if applicable, that links
5 with elementary and secondary school and post-
6 secondary data.

7 “(B) Accelerating the replication and
8 adoption of data systems, projects, products, or
9 practices already in use in one or more States
10 to other States.

11 “(C) Research and labor market data im-
12 provement activities to improve the timeliness,
13 relevance, and accessibility of such data
14 through pilot projects that are developed locally
15 but designed to scale to other regions or States.

16 “(D) Establishing, enhancing, or con-
17 necting to a system of interoperable learning
18 and employment records that provides individ-
19 uals who choose to participate in such system
20 ownership of a verified and secure record of
21 their skills and achievements and the ability to
22 share such record with employers and education
23 providers.

24 “(E) Developing policies, guidelines, and
25 security measures for data collection, storing,

1 and sharing to ensure compliance with relevant
2 Federal and State privacy laws and regulations.

3 “(F) Increasing local board access to and
4 integration with the State’s workforce longitu-
5 dinal data system in a secure manner.

6 “(G) Creating or participating in a data
7 exchange for collecting and using standards-
8 based jobs and employment data including, at a
9 minimum, job titles or occupation codes.

10 “(H) Improving State and local staff ca-
11 pacity to understand, use, and analyze data to
12 improve decision-making and improve partici-
13 pant outcomes.

14 “(5) ADMINISTRATION.—

15 “(A) DURATION.—A grant awarded under
16 this subsection may be for a period of up to 3
17 years.

18 “(B) SUPPLEMENT, NOT SUPPLANT.—
19 Funds made available under this subsection
20 shall be used to supplement, and not supplant,
21 other Federal, State, or local funds used for de-
22 velopment of State data systems.

23 “(C) REPORT.—Each eligible entity that
24 receives a grant under this subsection shall sub-
25 mit a report to the Secretary not later than 180

1 days after the conclusion of the grant period on
2 the activities supported through the grant and
3 improvements in the use of workforce and labor
4 market information that have resulted from
5 such activities.

6 “(6) ELIGIBLE ENTITY DEFINED.—In this sub-
7 section, the term ‘eligible entity’ means a State
8 agency or consortium of State agencies, including a
9 multistate data collaborative, that is or includes the
10 State agencies responsible for—

11 “(A) State employer wage records used by
12 the State’s unemployment insurance programs
13 in labor market information reporting and anal-
14 ysis and for fulfilling the reporting require-
15 ments of this Act;

16 “(B) the production of labor market infor-
17 mation; and

18 “(C) the direct administration of one or
19 more of the core programs.”.

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