

105TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 1709

To authorize the Secretary of Labor to provide assistance to States for the implementation of enhanced pre-vocational training programs, in order to improve the likelihood of enabling welfare recipients to make transitions from public assistance to employment, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 4, 1998

Mr. SPECTER introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of Labor to provide assistance to States for the implementation of enhanced pre-vocational training programs, in order to improve the likelihood of enabling welfare recipients to make transitions from public assistance to employment, 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 “Job Preparation and
5 Retention Training Act of 1998”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds that—

3 (1) training programs carried out under the
4 Job Training Partnership Act (29 U.S.C. 1501 et
5 seq.) that include a pre-vocational component have
6 had placement success rates that are better than the
7 success rates of programs under that Act that lack
8 that component;

9 (2) a need exists for skills training to enable in-
10 dividuals who are welfare recipients to make transi-
11 tions into unsubsidized employment that provides ca-
12 reer potential and enables the individuals to achieve
13 economic self-sufficiency;

14 (3) current Federal law does not adequately ad-
15 dress the tremendously deleterious effect of unfavor-
16 able environmental and cultural factors on the abil-
17 ity of such individuals to obtain and retain gainful
18 employment;

19 (4) a need exists for a Federal commitment to
20 the development of pre-vocational training programs
21 that focus on—

22 (A) improving the job readiness of individ-
23 uals who are welfare recipients;

24 (B) preparing the individuals psycho-
25 logically and attitudinally for employment;

1 (C) teaching the individuals learning and
2 other appropriate skills; and

3 (D) placing the individuals—

4 (i) in permanent unsubsidized employ-
5 ment; or

6 (ii) in skill training centers and, on
7 completion of the skill training, in perma-
8 nent unsubsidized employment; and

9 (5) community-based organizations—

10 (A) have provided such pre-vocational
11 training programs to disadvantaged popu-
12 lations, with demonstrable success; and

13 (B) should receive additional Federal as-
14 sistance to enable the organizations to enhance
15 the ability of the organizations to provide the
16 training programs in communities with large
17 populations of welfare recipients and enable the
18 organizations to provide the training programs
19 to additional welfare recipients.

20 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

21 In this Act:

22 (1) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
23 the Secretary of Labor.

24 (2) WELFARE RECIPIENT.—The term “welfare
25 recipient” means an individual receiving assistance

1 under a State program funded under part A of title
2 IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et
3 seq.).

4 (3) WELFARE TRANSITION PROGRAM.—The
5 term “welfare transition program” means a voca-
6 tional training program conducted by or at the di-
7 rection of a State as part of a State program de-
8 scribed in paragraph (2).

9 **SEC. 4. GRANTS TO STATES.**

10 (a) GRANTS.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make
12 grants to States to enable the States to assist com-
13 munity-based organizations in implementing en-
14 hanced pre-vocational training programs for eligible
15 individuals.

16 (2) GRANT PERIOD.—The Secretary shall make
17 the grants for periods of 1 year.

18 (b) STATE PLANS.—To be eligible to receive a grant
19 under this section, the State shall submit an application
20 to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and con-
21 taining such information as the Secretary may require. At
22 a minimum, the application shall contain—

23 (1) a State plan describing the pre-vocational
24 training programs to be carried out in the State
25 with funds made available through the grant; and

1 vocational training program, through which the or-
 2 ganization shall provide pre-vocational training and
 3 placement services to eligible individuals.

4 (2) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.—To be eligible to
 5 receive services through a pre-vocational training
 6 program under this Act, an individual shall

7 (A) be a welfare recipient who—

8 (i) is enrolled in a welfare transition
 9 program; or

10 (ii) is eligible to be enrolled in, but
 11 has not participated in, a welfare transi-
 12 tion program; or

13 (B) be a person who is incarcerated in a
 14 Federal, State, or local prison, and will be re-
 15 leased from the prison within a reasonable pe-
 16 riod, as defined in regulation by the Secretary.

17 (3) PRE-VOCATIONAL TRAINING.—

18 (A) WELFARE RECIPIENTS.—An organiza-
 19 tion selected by a State to implement a pre-vo-
 20 cational training program for eligible individ-
 21 uals described in paragraph (2)(A) shall—

22 (i) provide pre-vocational training,
 23 through job training centers, designed to—

24 (I) as quickly as practicable, en-
 25 able the individuals to overcome the

1 effects of inadequate educational prep-
2 aration and unfavorable environ-
3 mental and cultural factors, in order
4 to prepare the individuals for employ-
5 ment;

6 (II) improve the job readiness of
7 the individuals;

8 (III) prepare the individuals psy-
9 chologically and attitudinally for em-
10 ployment; and

11 (IV) enable the individuals to de-
12 velop learning skills, communication
13 and computational skills, punctuality,
14 health and personal maintenance
15 skills, job seeking skills (including
16 interviewing skills), basic literacy,
17 skills required for receipt of a second-
18 ary school diploma or its equivalent,
19 professionalism, and responsiveness
20 for authority; and

21 (ii) on completion of the pre-voca-
22 tional training, place the individuals—

23 (I) in permanent unsubsidized
24 employment; or

1 (II) in skill training centers that
2 provide superior skill training for po-
3 sitions that are quickly obtainable
4 and, on completion of the skill train-
5 ing, in permanent unsubsidized em-
6 ployment.

7 (B) INCARCERATED PERSONS.—An organi-
8 zation selected by a State to implement a pre-
9 vocational training program for eligible individ-
10 uals described in paragraph (2)(B) shall provide
11 the pre-vocational training described in sub-
12 paragraph (A)(i) in the Federal, State, or local
13 prison involved and provide the placement serv-
14 ices described in subparagraph (A)(ii)(II).

15 (4) LIMITS.—The organization shall provide not
16 less than 2 weeks and not more than 3 months of
17 pre-vocational training to an eligible individual
18 through the program. The organization shall not
19 provide more than \$1200 in services under the pro-
20 gram to an eligible individual.

21 (5) SPECIAL RULE.—No organization may
22 charge a fee to an eligible individual for services
23 under the program, if the individual is a citizen or
24 resident alien.

1 (6) COORDINATION.—A community-based orga-
2 nization providing placement services under this sub-
3 section shall coordinate the services with the efforts
4 of local private sector businesses to create jobs and
5 employment opportunities.

6 (c) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible to receive financial
7 assistance under this section, a community-based organi-
8 zation shall submit an application to the State at such
9 time, in such manner, and containing such information as
10 the Secretary may require.

11 **SEC. 6. MONITORING.**

12 The Secretary shall monitor the effectiveness of pro-
13 grams carried out under this Act by collecting information
14 on—

15 (1) the percentage of program participants who
16 are placed in employment after that participation;

17 (2) the percentage of the participants who are
18 retained in employment after that participation; and

19 (3) the economic impact of the employment of
20 the participants.

21 **SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

22 There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
23 this Act \$50,000,000 for fiscal years 1999 and 2000.

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