

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 235

To direct the Secretary of Labor to enter into contracts with industry intermediaries for purposes of promoting the development of and access to apprenticeships and related pre-apprenticeships for secondary school students.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 23, 2025

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

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Labor to enter into contracts with industry intermediaries for purposes of promoting the development of and access to apprenticeships and related pre-apprenticeships for secondary school students.

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 “Apprenticeship Path-
5 ways Act of 2025”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

1 (1) APPRENTICESHIP.—The term “apprentice-
2 ship” means an apprenticeship registered under the
3 National Apprenticeship Act.

4 (2) DISABILITY.—The term “disability” has the
5 meaning given such term in section 3 of the Ameri-
6 cans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C.
7 12102).

8 (3) DISCONNECTED YOUTH.—The term “dis-
9 connected youth” means any individual who—

10 (A) has attained age 16 but not age 25 on
11 the date of selection for an apprenticeship;

12 (B) is not regularly attending any sec-
13 ondary school, area career and technical edu-
14 cation school (as defined in section 3 of the
15 Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Edu-
16 cation Act of 2006 (29 U.S.C. 2302)), or post-
17 secondary school during the 6-month period
18 preceding the date of selection for the appren-
19 ticeship; and

20 (C) is not regularly employed during such
21 6-month period.

22 (4) EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL.—The term
23 “early college high school” has the meaning given
24 such term in section 8101 of the Elementary and
25 Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

1 (5) EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AGENCY.—The
 2 term “educational service agency” has the meaning
 3 given such term in section 8101 of the Elementary
 4 and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
 5 7801).

6 (6) HIGH SCHOOL.—The term “high school”
 7 has the meaning given such term in section 8101 of
 8 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of
 9 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

10 (7) INDUSTRY INTERMEDIARY.—The term “in-
 11 dustry intermediary” means an entity that—

12 (A) in order to accelerate apprenticeship
 13 program development, to help establish new ap-
 14 prenticeship partnerships at the national, State,
 15 or regional level, and to promote access to ap-
 16 prenticeships for secondary school students,
 17 serves as a conduit between—

18 (i) an employer; and

19 (ii) an entity such as—

20 (I) an industry partner;

21 (II) the Department of Labor;

22 and

23 (III) a State agency responsible
 24 for workforce investment activities;

(B) demonstrates a capacity to work with employers and other key partners to identify workforce trends and foster public-private funding to establish new apprenticeship programs; and

(C) is an entity such as—

(i) a business;

(ii) a business-related nonprofit organization, including industry associations and business federations;

(iii) a private organization functioning as a workforce intermediary for the express purpose of serving the needs of businesses, including community-based nonprofit service providers and industry-aligned training providers; or

(iv) a consortium of any of the entities described in clauses (i) through (iii).

(8) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.—The term “local educational agency” has the meaning given such term in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

(9) NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP ACT.—The term “National Apprenticeship Act” means the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the “Na-

1 tional Apprenticeship Act”; 50 Stat. 664, chapter
2 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.).

3 (10) PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM.—The
4 term “pre-apprenticeship program” means a train-
5 ing model or program that—

6 (A) prepares individuals for acceptance
7 into an apprenticeship program;

8 (B) meets the standards, for such a model
9 or program, established under the National Ap-
10 prenticeship Act; and

11 (C) is registered under the National Ap-
12 prenticeship Act.

13 (11) REGION.—The term “region” has the
14 meaning given the term in section 3 of the Work-
15 force Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C.
16 3102).

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

21 (13) STEM.—The term “STEM” means
22 science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

1 **SEC. 3. SECONDARY EDUCATION APPRENTICESHIP CON-**
 2 **TRACTS.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Labor (referred
 4 to in this section as “the Secretary”), in consultation with
 5 the Secretary of Education, shall enter into contracts with
 6 industry intermediaries for the purpose of promoting the
 7 development of and access to apprenticeships for sec-
 8 ondary school students, from amounts appropriated under
 9 subsection (f).

10 (b) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to be awarded a con-
 11 tract under this section, an industry intermediary shall
 12 submit an application to the Secretary, at such time and
 13 in such manner as may be required by the Secretary, that
 14 identifies proposed activities designed to further the pur-
 15 pose described in subsection (a).

16 (c) SELECTION.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award
 18 contracts under this section based on competitive
 19 criteria to be prescribed by the Secretary.

20 (2) PRIORITY CONSIDERATION FOR CON-
 21 TRACTS.—In awarding contracts under this section,
 22 the Secretary shall give priority consideration to
 23 intermediaries proposing contracts targeting—

24 (A) engagement with students from sec-
 25 ondary schools in which 40 percent of the stu-
 26 dents the local educational agency serves are el-

1 igible for free or reduced price lunches under
 2 the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch
 3 Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.);

4 (B) engagement with students served by—

5 (i) rural high-need local educational
 6 agencies with locale codes of 32, 33, 41,
 7 42, or 43; or

8 (ii) educational service agencies serv-
 9 ing rural high-need local educational agen-
 10 cies with locale codes of 32, 33, 41, 42, or
 11 43;

12 (C) engagement with students residing in a
 13 Census tract that is a high poverty area, as de-
 14 fined in section 681.260 of title 20, Code of
 15 Federal Regulations, or a successor regulation;

16 (D) engagement with disconnected youth;

17 (E) engagement with an Indian child, as
 18 defined in section 4 of the Indian Child Welfare
 19 Act of 1978 (25 U.S.C. 1903);

20 (F) increasing participation of women in
 21 building trades and technology; and

22 (G) engagement with individuals with dis-
 23 abilities.

24 (d) USE OF FUNDS.—

1 (1) GENERAL ACTIVITIES.—An industry inter-
2 mediary that is awarded a contract under this sec-
3 tion may only use the funds made available through
4 such contract to carry out activities designed to fur-
5 ther the purpose described in subsection (a), includ-
6 ing—

7 (A) facilitating the development and provi-
8 sion of apprenticeships and related pre-appren-
9 ticeships, in the occupations of high need listed
10 in subsection (e), through collaborations with
11 public and private entities that provide job-re-
12 lated instruction, such as on-the-job training,
13 pre-apprenticeship training, and technical train-
14 ing;

15 (B) encouraging entities to establish such
16 apprenticeships and related pre-apprenticeships;

17 (C) identifying, assessing, and training ap-
18 plicants for such apprenticeships and pre-ap-
19 prenticeships who are—

20 (i) enrolled in secondary school;

21 (ii) enrolled in an early college high
22 school that focuses on education in STEM
23 subjects;

1 (iii) individuals age 18 or older who
 2 meet appropriate qualification standards;
 3 or

4 (iv) enrolled in a pre-apprenticeship,
 5 or a training initiative for an apprentice-
 6 ship, that allow adults to concurrently in-
 7 crease academic and workforce skills
 8 through proven, evidence-based models
 9 that connect all learning to the specific ap-
 10 prenticeship involved and significantly ac-
 11 celerate completion of preparation for the
 12 apprenticeship;

13 (D) tracking the progress of such appli-
 14 cants who participate in such apprenticeships;

15 (E) orientation and training prior to the
 16 apprenticeship, and ongoing support;

17 (F) recruitment and retention of employer
 18 partners;

19 (G) administrative and operational activi-
 20 ties;

21 (H) coaching, including development of life
 22 skills, social-emotional skills, soft skills, employ-
 23 ability skills, and workforce readiness;

24 (I) wraparound support services, including
 25 monitoring of academic progress of the appren-

tice, and provision to the apprentice of financial incentives of payments for child and family care costs (such as transportation assistance or a gas card), and of free tutoring and career services (which may include benefit counseling), in order to create a community of apprentices participating in the activities described in subsection (b); and

(J) paying 50 percent of the wages of an apprentice for the duration of the apprenticeship involved.

(2) GOODS AND SERVICES.—An industry intermediary that receives a contract under this section may use the funds made available through such contract for goods and services, including—

(A) related educational goods and services, including provision of tuition assistance, books, and fees associated with any related instruction;

(B) equipment and tools related to the apprenticeship occupation;

(C) clothing, including construction boots, kneepads, hard hats, and visibility vests, related to the apprenticeship occupation; and

(D) technology and internet access.

1 (e) OCCUPATIONS OF HIGH NEED.—The occupations
 2 of high need referred to in subsection (d)(1)(A) are occu-
 3 pations that relate to—

4 (1) building trades, including—

5 (A) carpentry;

6 (B) plumbing;

7 (C) welding;

8 (D) electrician occupations;

9 (E) machinist occupations;

10 (F) mechanic occupations;

11 (G) pipe fitting;

12 (H) heating, ventilation, and air condi-
 13 tioning occupations;

14 (I) operating engineer and equipment oper-
 15 ator occupations;

16 (J) cement mason occupations;

17 (K) sheet metal work occupations;

18 (L) boilermaker occupations;

19 (M) solar installation; and

20 (N) roofing;

21 (2) architectural and engineering drafting and
 22 design;

23 (3) health care, including the occupations of—

24 (A) emergency medical technicians;

25 (B) phlebotomists;

1 (C) pharmacy technicians;

2 (D) respiratory therapists;

3 (E) home health aides;

4 (F) radiologic technologists;

5 (G) licensed practical nurses;

6 (H) nurse technicians; and

7 (I) laboratory technicians;

8 (4) teaching, including early childhood edu-
9 cators;

10 (5) technology, including—

11 (A) computer science occupations;

12 (B) fabrication laboratory technician;

13 (C) telecommunications occupations;

14 (D) data science occupations; and

15 (E) product management; and

16 (6) manufacturing.

17 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
18 are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary such
19 sums as may be necessary for the purposes of carrying
20 out this section.

