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SENATE BILL NO. 756

Offered January 18, 2008

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 2.2-2674.01, relating to creation of the Virginia Career Readiness Certification Program; report.

Patron—Ruff

Referred to Committee on Education and Health

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 2.2-2674.01 as follows:**

§ 2.2-2674.01. Virginia Career Readiness Certification Program.

A. There is created the Virginia Career Readiness Certification Program (the Program) to certify the workplace and college readiness skills of Virginians, in order to better prepare them for continued education and workforce training, successful employment, and career advancement.

B. The Program may be offered through public high schools, community colleges, one-stop centers, technical centers, vocation rehabilitation centers, the Department of Correctional Education, institutions of higher education, and any other appropriate institutions as determined by the Virginia Workforce Council.

C. The Program shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. A nationally recognized multilevel Career Readiness Certificate and related pre-instructional assessment tool to quantify an individual's level of proficiency in the following measurable work-ready skills: (i) reading, (ii) applied math, (iii) locating information, and (iv) any additional skills necessary to meet business and industry skill demand;

2. Targeted instruction and remediation skills training to address those work-ready skills in which the individual is not proficient as measured by the pre-instructional assessment tool, including a bilingual web-based program with an in-house data center, customized to meet identified specific skill needs of local employers;

3. A Career Readiness Certificate awarded to individuals upon successful attainment of work-ready skills as documented by the assessment tool; and

4. A statewide online Virginia Skills Bank to serve as the repository for Career Readiness Certificate attainment data. The Virginia Skills Bank shall (i) serve as the administrative tool to administer and promote the Program; (ii) incorporate online services that enable employers to search individual Career Readiness Certificate recipients for job placement opportunities; and (iii) incorporate online services that offer individuals tools for career exploration, continued education opportunities, job-readiness practice, and job search capabilities.

D. The Council, in consultation with the P-16 Education Council, shall promulgate regulations necessary to implement and administer the Program.

E. The Council shall report Program outcomes to the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee, Senate Education and Health Committee, House Commerce and Labor Committee, and House Education Committee of the General Assembly by December 1 of each year.

2. That the Council shall investigate the creation of a Work-Ready Community Certification Program and report its findings to the House Commerce and Labor Committee, House Education Committee, Senate Commerce and Labor Committee, and Senate Education and Health Committee of the General Assembly by December 1, 2008.

3. That funding for the provisions of this act shall come from funds made available under the Workforce Investment Act state set-aside funding in the amount of \$1 million, as authorized by Section 191 of the Workforce Investment Act (PL 105-220).

INTRODUCED

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