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**SENATE BILL NO. 1209**

Offered January 14, 2015

Prefiled January 13, 2015

*A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Title 23 a chapter numbered 4.03, consisting of sections numbered 23-38.10:14 through 23-38.10:17, relating to workforce development grants for earning certain workforce training credentials; New Economy Industry Credential Assistance Training Grants.*

Patrons—Wagner, Garrett, Ruff, Smith and Stanley; Delegates: Byron, DeSteph, Lingamfelter and Marshall, D.W.

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 in Title 23 a chapter numbered 4.03, consisting of sections numbered 23-38.10:14 through 23-38.10:17, as follows:**

**CHAPTER 4.03.****NEW ECONOMY INDUSTRY CREDENTIAL ASSISTANCE TRAINING GRANTS.****§ 23-38.10:14. Grants for obtaining workforce training credentials.**

*A. As used in this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning:*

*"Board" means the Virginia Board of Workforce Development.*

*"Credential" means a certification earned that has been approved by the Board, the passing of a licensure examination, or the passing of an occupational competency assessment.*

*"Eligible institution" means (i) a Virginia community college, (ii) a private institution certified to operate in Virginia by SCHEV that has made a written election to participate in the grant program under this chapter, or (iii) the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, New College Institute, Roanoke Higher Education Center, Southern Virginia Higher Education Center, Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center, or Eastern Virginia Medical School.*

*"Grant" means a New Economy Industry Credential Assistance Training Grant.*

*"High-demand field" means an area, discipline, or field in which there is a shortage of skilled workers to fill current job vacancies or anticipated additional job openings as determined by the Board in consultation with business and industry representatives and local, regional, and state economic development agencies.*

*"SCHEV" means the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia.*

*"Student" means a resident of the Commonwealth who is (i) enrolled in a public or private high school and is participating in a dual enrollment program or (ii) not enrolled in a public or private middle or high school.*

*B. 1. Any student who (i) has successfully completed a noncredit workforce training program provided or sponsored by an eligible institution as a prerequisite of or in preparation for earning a credential and (ii) subsequently earns the related credential in a high-demand field shall be paid a grant not to exceed an aggregate amount of \$1,000 for the tuition charged for the program, any required textbooks for the program, and the cost of any examination required to earn the credential.*

*2. Noncredit workforce training programs for which grants may be paid shall include, but are not limited to, programs directly relating to a credential identified in the Virginia Education Wizard and the Virginia Manufacturers Association's "Dream It. Do It. Virginia" career information system.*

*3. No grant shall be paid to the extent that the student received a scholarship or the student's employer paid or will pay for the noncredit workforce training program, any required textbooks for the program, or the cost of any examination required to earn the credential.*

*4. A student shall not receive more than one grant for the same or substantially related noncredit workforce training program, including the cost of any examination required to earn a credential.*

**§ 23-38.10:15. Applications for New Economy Industry Credential Assistance Training Grants.**

*A. A student who has met the requirements under subdivision B 1 of § 23-38.10:14 for a noncredit workforce training program provided or sponsored by (i) a Virginia community college or (ii) the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, New College Institute, Roanoke Higher Education Center, Southern Virginia Higher Education Center, Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center, or Eastern Virginia Medical School may apply for a grant from the community college or the institution that provided or sponsored the program. The student shall submit invoices or receipts for the tuition, cost of required textbooks, and examination fees relating to the credential and such other information as reasonably may be required by the community college or the institution. Upon receipt of evidence*

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58 *satisfactory to the community college or the institution of the student having met the requirements under*  
59 *subdivision B 1 of § 23-38.10:14 and of payment of the tuition, cost of required textbooks, and*  
60 *examination fees relating to the credential, the community college or the institution shall make the grant*  
61 *payment to the student pursuant to such subdivision.*

62 *The community college or the institution then may request reimbursement from the Comptroller for*  
63 *the amount of the grant. The Comptroller shall reimburse the community college or the institution as*  
64 *soon as practicable.*

65 *B. A student who has met the requirements under subdivision B 1 of § 23-38.10:14 for a noncredit*  
66 *workforce training program provided or sponsored by a private institution certified to operate in*  
67 *Virginia by SCHEV shall be eligible for a grant provided that the private institution has made a written*  
68 *election to participate in the grant program under this chapter. The election shall be made on a form*  
69 *prescribed by SCHEV. Any such private institution making the election shall submit the completed form*  
70 *to the Director of SCHEV, or his designee, who shall promptly furnish the Comptroller with a copy of*  
71 *the same.*

72 *The student shall submit invoices or receipts for the tuition, cost of required textbooks, and*  
73 *examination fees relating to the credential and such other information as reasonably may be required by*  
74 *the SCHEV-certified private institution that provided or sponsored the noncredit workforce training*  
75 *program. Upon receipt of evidence satisfactory to the private institution of the student having met the*  
76 *requirements under subdivision B 1 of § 23-38.10:14 and of payment of the tuition, cost of required*  
77 *textbooks, and examination fees relating to the credential, the private institution shall make the grant*  
78 *payment to the student pursuant to such subdivision.*

79 *The private institution then may request reimbursement from the Comptroller for the amount of the*  
80 *grant. The Comptroller shall reimburse the private institution as soon as practicable.*

81 *C. The Comptroller shall work closely with the Chancellor of the Virginia Community College*  
82 *System; the Executive Director of the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, New College*  
83 *Institute, Roanoke Higher Education Center, Southern Virginia Higher Education Center, and Southwest*  
84 *Virginia Higher Education Center; the President and Provost of Eastern Virginia Medical School; and*  
85 *the president or chief executive officer of any SCHEV-certified private institution that has elected to*  
86 *participate in the grant program to ensure that grants paid under this chapter do not exceed the*  
87 *fiscal-year appropriation in the general appropriation act for the payment of such grants.*

88 **§ 23-38.10:16. Board of Workforce Development to keep a list of high-demand fields and**  
89 **certifications.**

90 *The Board shall maintain and update a list of high-demand fields and the related credentials on its*  
91 *website. The Board shall also maintain and update on its website a list of industry certifications that*  
92 *qualify as credentials.*

93 **§ 23-38.10:17. Virginia Community College System to develop guidelines.**

94 *The Virginia Community College System, in consultation with the Board, the Comptroller, and*  
95 *SCHEV, shall develop, publish, and update guidelines implementing the provisions of this chapter. The*  
96 *guidelines shall be exempt from the provisions of the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.).*

97 **2. That the provisions of this act shall become effective on January 1, 2016.**