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SENATE BILL NO. 1209

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

(Proposed by the Senate Committee on Finance
on February 5, 2015)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Senator Wagner)

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, 23-38.10:15, and 23-38.10:16, relating to workforce development grants for earning certain workforce training credentials; New Economy Industry Credential Assistance Training Grants.*

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, 23-38.10:15, and 23-38.10:16, as follows:

CHAPTER 4.03.

NEW ECONOMY INDUSTRY CREDENTIAL ASSISTANCE TRAINING GRANTS.

§ 23-38.10:14. New Economy Industry Credential Assistance Training Grant Fund and Program.

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

"Board" means the Virginia Board of Workforce Development.

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

"Credential" means a certification that has been approved by the Council.

"Eligible institution" means a two-year or four-year public institution of higher education in the Commonwealth.

"Fund" means the New Economy Industry Credential Assistance Training Grant Fund.

"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.

"Student" means an individual who (i) has established domicile in the Commonwealth pursuant to § 23-7.4, (ii) is enrolled in a noncredit workforce training program provided or sponsored by an eligible institution as a prerequisite of or in preparation for earning a credential, and (iii) plans to subsequently earn the related credential in a high-demand field.

B. There is hereby created in the state treasury a special nonreverting fund to be known as the New Economy Industry Credential Assistance Training Grant Fund. The Fund shall be established on the books of the Comptroller. All moneys as may be appropriated by the General Assembly and any gifts, bequests, grants, or donations shall be paid into the state treasury and credited to the Fund. Interest earned on moneys in the Fund shall remain in the Fund and be credited to it. Any moneys remaining in the Fund, including interest thereon, at the end of each fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund but shall remain in the Fund. Moneys in the Fund shall be used solely for the purposes of grants. Expenditures and disbursements from the Fund shall be made by the State Treasurer on warrants issued by the Comptroller upon written request signed by the Director of the Council.

C. Beginning January 1, 2016, a student may apply to the Council for a grant from the Fund. Each student shall be eligible to receive a grant not to exceed an aggregate amount of \$1,000 for the tuition charged for the noncredit workforce training program, any required textbooks for such program, and the cost of any examination required to earn the related credential in a high-demand field. 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. Grants shall be issued in the order that each completed eligible application is received.

D. Noncredit workforce training programs for which grants may be paid shall include 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.

E. No grant shall be paid to the extent that the student received federal, state, local, employer, or institution financial assistance for the cost of (i) the noncredit workforce training program, including textbooks and related fees, or (ii) any examination required to earn the credential.

F. Eligible institutions offering credentials shall submit student-level and program-level data to the Council pursuant to subdivision 9 of § 23-9.6:1.

§ 23-38.10:15. Board of Workforce Development to keep a list of high-demand fields and certifications.

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

60 *qualify as credentials. The Board shall forward both lists to the Director of the Council.*

61 **§ 23-38.10:16. State Council of Higher Education for Virginia to develop guidelines.**

62 *The Council, in consultation with each eligible institution and the Board, shall develop, publish, and*
63 *update regulations implementing the provisions of this chapter.*

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

65 **3. That the provisions of this act shall not become effective unless an appropriation effectuating**
66 **the purposes of this act is included in a general appropriation act passed in 2015 by the General**
67 **Assembly that becomes law.**