

House File 447 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE 447

BY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

(SUCCESSOR TO HF 6)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to workforce development, including
2 establishing the Iowa workforce grant and incentive program
3 and modifying the responsibilities of the Iowa workforce
4 development board and the state board of regents.
5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. Section 84A.1B, Code 2023, is amended by adding
2 the following new subsection:

3 NEW SUBSECTION. 17. Create, in collaboration with the state
4 board of regents, a list of high-wage and high-demand jobs and
5 corresponding academic majors offered by institutions of higher
6 education governed by the state board of regents for purposes
7 of the Iowa workforce grant and incentive program established
8 under section 261.133. The workforce development board, in
9 collaboration with the state board of regents, shall update the
10 list at least once every two years. In creating a list under
11 this subsection, the following criteria, at a minimum, shall
12 apply:

13 a. An entry-level annual salary of not less than forty
14 thousand dollars.

15 b. Educational attainment of a qualifying credential of
16 at least a bachelor's degree, or attainment of an initial or
17 intern Iowa teaching license issued under chapter 272 through
18 a pathway to licensure offered by an institution of higher
19 education under the control of the state board of regents or an
20 accredited private institution as defined in section 261.9.

21 c. At least one of any of the following:

22 (1) Projected annual job openings of at least two hundred
23 fifty during the next five years.

24 (2) Projected annual growth in the number of job openings
25 of at least one percent.

26 Sec. 2. NEW SECTION. 261.133 Iowa workforce grant and
27 incentive program.

28 1. *Definitions.* As used in this section, unless the context
29 otherwise requires:

30 a. "*Commission*" means the college student aid commission.

31 b. "*Eligible institution*" means an institution of higher
32 learning governed by the state board of regents.

33 c. "*Eligible program*" means any of the following:

34 (1) A program of study or an academic major jointly approved
35 by the workforce development board and the state board of

1 regents pursuant to section 84A.1B, subsection 17. If a
2 job is removed from the list created under section 84A.1B,
3 subsection 17, an eligible student who received a grant for
4 a program based on that job shall continue to receive the
5 grant until the eligible program is completed as long as the
6 student continuously enrolls and continues to meet all other
7 eligibility requirements.

8 (2) A teacher preparation program that leads to a bachelor's
9 degree, or initial or intern teaching license issued under
10 chapter 272.

11 *d. "Eligible student"* means an Iowa resident who has
12 established financial need and who meets all of the following
13 requirements:

14 (1) Completes and submits application forms required by the
15 commission, including the free application for federal student
16 aid, by the deadline prescribed by the commission.

17 (2) Enrolls in at least three semester hours, or the
18 equivalent, in an eligible program.

19 (3) Is making satisfactory academic progress as defined by
20 the eligible institution.

21 *e. "Financial need"* means the difference between the
22 student's financial resources available, including those
23 available from the student's parents as determined by a
24 completed parents' confidential statement, and the student's
25 anticipated expenses while attending an eligible institution.

26 *f. "Full-time"* means enrollment in at least twelve semester
27 hours or the equivalent.

28 *g. "Part-time"* means enrollment in at least three semester
29 hours or the equivalent but less than twelve semester hours or
30 the equivalent.

31 2. *Student eligibility.* An eligible institution shall
32 report promptly to the commission information requested to
33 establish or verify student eligibility.

34 3. *Grant limitations — requirements.*

35 *a.* A full-time eligible student may receive an Iowa

1 workforce grant for not more than four semesters, or the
2 equivalent, or until the eligible student completes the
3 eligible program, whichever occurs first. A part-time
4 eligible student may receive the grant for not more than eight
5 semesters, or the equivalent, on a prorated basis, or until
6 the eligible student completes the eligible program, whichever
7 occurs first.

8 *b.* The amount of an Iowa workforce grant to a full-time
9 eligible student shall not exceed two thousand dollars per
10 semester, or the equivalent. The amount of an Iowa workforce
11 grant to a part-time eligible student shall be equal to the
12 amount that would be awarded to a full-time student except that
13 the commission shall prorate the amount based on the recipient
14 student's semester hour or equivalent enrollment.

15 *c.* An Iowa workforce grant shall be awarded on an annual
16 basis, requiring reapplication by an eligible student each
17 year. Payments under the grant shall be allocated equally
18 among the semesters, or the equivalent, and paid upon
19 certification by the eligible institution that the student
20 meets the requirements of subsection 1, paragraph "d".

21 *d.* If a grant recipient discontinues attendance before the
22 end of any semester, or the equivalent, after receiving grant
23 payments, the entire amount of any refund due that recipient,
24 up to the full amount of grant payments made during that
25 semester, or the equivalent, shall be paid by the eligible
26 institution to the commission.

27 4. *Annual submission of applications.* To receive a renewal
28 of a grant awarded under this section, an eligible student
29 must annually submit a new application to the commission for
30 reevaluation of eligibility.

31 5. *Priority for grant awards.* In making awards under this
32 section, the commission shall give priority to:

33 *a.* Applicants who received an award under this section in
34 the prior academic year.

35 *b.* Applicants with the least financial ability to pay,

1 using a metric that ranks relative financial ability among all
2 applicants.

3 6. *Iowa workforce incentive payment.* Notwithstanding the
4 grant limitations in subsection 3, an individual who was an
5 eligible student who received an Iowa workforce grant in the
6 academic year in which the eligible program is completed, and
7 who accepts and begins employment in an aligned occupation
8 in this state within six months of completing the eligible
9 program, may apply for one incentive payment of up to two
10 thousand dollars. The incentive payment shall be paid upon
11 completion of twelve consecutive months of full-time employment
12 in the aligned occupation in this state, following completion
13 of the eligible program.

14 7. *Commission's duties and responsibilities.* Subject to an
15 appropriation of moneys by the general assembly for purposes
16 of this section, the commission shall administer the Iowa
17 workforce grant and incentive program and shall do all of the
18 following:

19 a. Provide application forms for distribution to students by
20 eligible institutions.

21 b. Adopt rules under chapter 17A for administration of this
22 section, including establishing the duties and responsibilities
23 of eligible institutions under the program, defining residence
24 and satisfactory academic progress for purposes of the program,
25 determining financial need, and establishing procedures for
26 grant and incentive payment application, processing, and
27 approval. The rules shall provide for determining the priority
28 awarding of grants and incentives if moneys available for
29 purposes of this section are insufficient to pay all eligible
30 applicants.

31 c. Approve and award grants and incentive payments on an
32 annual basis.

33 8. *Fund created.* An Iowa workforce grant and incentive
34 program fund is created in the state treasury under the control
35 of the commission. All moneys deposited or paid into the

1 fund are appropriated to the commission to be used for grants
2 and incentive payments awarded as provided in this section.
3 Notwithstanding section 8.33, moneys in the fund that remain
4 unencumbered or unobligated at the close of a fiscal year shall
5 not revert but shall remain available for expenditure for the
6 purposes designated. Notwithstanding section 12C.7, subsection
7 2, interest or earnings on moneys in the fund shall be credited
8 to the fund.

9

EXPLANATION

10 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
11 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

12 This bill relates to workforce development, including
13 establishing the Iowa workforce grant and incentive program
14 and modifying the responsibilities of the Iowa workforce
15 development board and the state board of regents.

16 The bill establishes the Iowa workforce grant and incentive
17 program (WGIP) within the college student aid commission
18 (commission), subject to an appropriation of moneys by the
19 general assembly. The bill provides that a full-time eligible
20 student may receive an annual grant under the WGIP for not more
21 than four semesters or until the eligible student completes
22 the eligible program, whichever occurs first. The bill also
23 provides that a part-time eligible student may receive an
24 annual grant under the WGIP for not more than eight semesters,
25 on a prorated basis, or until the eligible student completes
26 the eligible program, whichever occurs first. The bill
27 establishes that the maximum amount of a grant under the WGIP
28 to a full-time eligible student shall not exceed \$2,000 per
29 semester, and the maximum amount of a grant under the WGIP to
30 a part-time eligible student shall be prorated based on the
31 part-time eligible student's semester hour enrollment. The
32 bill requires eligible students to submit new applications
33 under the WGIP to the commission annually for reevaluation
34 of eligibility. The bill provides that if a grant recipient
35 discontinues attendance before the end of any semester, the

1 eligible institution is required to pay to the commission the
2 entire amount of any refund due to that recipient, up to the
3 full amount of the grant payments made during the semester.

4 When making awards under the WGIP, the bill requires the
5 commission to give priority to applicants who received an
6 award in the prior academic year and applicants with the least
7 financial ability to pay.

8 The bill provides that an individual who was an eligible
9 student who received a grant under the WGIP in the academic
10 year in which the eligible program is completed, and who
11 accepts and begins employment in an aligned occupation in this
12 state within six months of completing the eligible program,
13 may apply to the commission for one incentive payment of up to
14 \$2,000. The bill establishes that the commission shall pay the
15 incentive payment upon the successful applicant's completion of
16 12 consecutive months of employment in this state.

17 The bill establishes an Iowa workforce grant and incentive
18 program fund in the state treasury under the control of the
19 commission. The bill provides that all moneys deposited or
20 paid into the fund are appropriated to the commission to be
21 used for awarding grants and incentive payments under the WGIP.

22 The bill defines "commission", "eligible institution",
23 "eligible program", "eligible student", "financial need",
24 "full-time", and "part-time".

25 The bill requires the Iowa workforce development board, in
26 collaboration with the state board of regents, to create a list
27 of high-wage and high-demand jobs and corresponding academic
28 majors offered by institutions of higher education governed by
29 the state board of regents for purposes of the WGIP. The bill
30 establishes the criteria for inclusion on the list. The bill
31 requires the Iowa workforce development board, in collaboration
32 with the state board of regents, to update the list at least
33 once every two years.