

By Mr. LeDuc of Marlborough, petition of Stephen P. LeDuc for legislation to establish a high skill training program for spot labor shortage problems in the Commonwealth. Labor and Workforce Development.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In the Year Two Thousand and Seven.

AN ACT CREATING A HIGH SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAM.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Purpose.

The purpose of the legislation is to create a high skills training program designed to combat "spot" labor skill shortages in the Commonwealth. Over the course of the current economic recovery the state economy has generated a substantial number of new employment opportunities. Many of the newly created jobs are in occupations that require technical skills that are in short supply within the Commonwealth. Labor shortage problems in information technology, biotechnology, computer software, metalworking occupations and construction trades all constrain the level of output and income growth within the Commonwealth. Job vacancy rates in some industry sectors in the state are currently in the eight to ten percent range. Moreover, the low quit rates and new hire rates in these industries combined with high job vacancy rates provide powerful evidence of substantial shortages of qualified labor supply in a number of specific occupational areas. This legislation authorizes the creation of a new program within the Corporation for Business, Work and Learning that would provide resources to support joint industry-education training programs aimed at upgrading and retraining the unemployed and mal-employed population within the state.

SECTION 2. Establishing a 50/50 Critical Skill Shortage Program.

3 This section will establish a new program within the Corporation
4 for Business, Work and Learning (CBWL) that will provide educa-
5 tional and training services designed to respond to specific occupa-
6 tional labor shortages within key industry segments of the
7 Massachusetts economy. CBWL will identify areas of labor shortage
8 within the state and work to develop training programs of less than
9 one year duration to help solve labor shortage problems. This pro-
10 gram will provide grants up to \$100,000 per year that must be
11 matched by an equal contribution from private sector partners. These
12 grants will be used to provide training in occupations in which
13 CBWL determines a labor shortage or a similar structural imbalance
14 within a state or sub-state labor market segment. The training pro-
15 vided under this statute must be conducted by an educational institu-
16 tion within the Commonwealth. In no event shall funds under this
17 provision be used to support on-the-job or incumbent worker
18 training.

1 SECTION 3. Building Business Education Partnerships.

2 CBWL may use the authorized funds to create business-education
3 training partnerships that can sustain training programs after state
4 funding ceases. CBWL may use up to fifteen percent of the funds
5 authorized in creating such partnerships and for the general adminis-
6 tration of the program. All remaining funds must be used in the
7 direct provision of training services. The funds made available are
8 intended to serve as seed money in fostering the creation of training
9 programs that respond to labor shortage problems. In no event will a
10 program be funded for more than two program cycles. CBWL
11 should place