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HOUSE BILL 303

56TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2024

INTRODUCED BY

Linda Serrato and Cristina Parajón

AN ACT

RELATING TO SOCIAL SERVICES; CREATING A PILOT PROGRAM USING
FEDERAL TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES BLOCK GRANT
FUNDING TO PROVIDE ECONOMIC SUPPORT IN THE FORM OF MONETARY
STIPENDS TO NEW MEXICO RESIDENTS PARTICIPATING IN THE PILOT
PROGRAM; REQUIRING PARTICIPANTS TO BE ENROLLED IN CERTAIN
WORKFORCE TRAINING PROGRAMS; PROVIDING FOR PARTICIPANT
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND PROCESSES TO APPROVE WORKFORCE
TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR SPECIFIC INDUSTRIES OR FIELDS; PROVIDING
DEFINITIONS; MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. A new section of the Higher Education
Department Act is enacted to read:

"[NEW MATERIAL] DEFINITIONS.--As used in Sections 1 and 2
of this 2024 act:

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1 A. "participant" means a New Mexico resident
2 approved by the department to participate in the pilot program;

3 B. "pilot program" means the New Mexico workforce
4 training economic support pilot program; and

5 C. "workforce training program" means a training or
6 educational program, including an apprenticeship or other work-
7 based learning program accredited by a state institution of
8 higher learning, that, upon successful completion by a
9 participant, the participant will earn a certification, license
10 or credential or will have acquired specialized qualifications
11 or skills recognized within an industry or field as appropriate
12 to obtain employment in that industry or field."

13 SECTION 2. A new section of the Higher Education
14 Department Act is enacted to read:

15 "[NEW MATERIAL] NEW MEXICO WORKFORCE TRAINING ECONOMIC
16 SUPPORT PILOT PROGRAM--CREATED--ADMINISTRATION--ELIGIBILITY--
17 MONETARY STIPEND--RULES.--

18 A. The "New Mexico workforce training economic
19 support pilot program" is created within the department as a
20 five-year study. The purpose of the pilot program is to:

21 (1) demonstrate that the state can measurably
22 increase access to living wage jobs, thereby meeting the
23 state's needs for jobs in high-demand industries and fields and
24 reducing poverty, increasing financial stability and lowering
25 dependence on government services for participants by providing

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1 ongoing economic support through monetary stipends during the
2 period in which those participants are enrolled in and
3 attending certain department-approved workforce training
4 programs;

5 (2) develop and implement eligibility criteria
6 for New Mexico residents to participate in the pilot program.
7 Criteria for consideration should include current income,
8 education and employment status of applicants to the pilot
9 program, and eligibility criteria shall not restrict
10 participants based on immigration status;

11 (3) develop and administer an economic support
12 program to provide participants with ongoing monetary stipends
13 to enable the participants to acquire training and skills
14 necessary to obtain employment, earn a living wage and, in the
15 process of acquiring that training, to prevent income, housing
16 and food insecurity. The stipends provided pursuant to this
17 paragraph should cover the costs associated with basic living
18 needs, including housing, food and transportation, and the
19 costs associated with enrolling in and attending a workforce
20 training program; and

21 (4) identify and approve workforce training
22 programs in the following priority industries or fields:

23 (a) health care, including behavioral
24 health;

25 (b) early childhood education or care;

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- 1 (c) natural resources management;
- 2 (d) renewable energy;
- 3 (e) broadband expansion;
- 4 (f) first responders;
- 5 (g) construction industries;
- 6 (h) aerospace;
- 7 (i) biosciences;
- 8 (j) cybersecurity;
- 9 (k) film and television;
- 10 (l) outdoor recreation;
- 11 (m) sustainable agriculture;
- 12 (n) intelligent manufacturing; and
- 13 (o) global trade.

14 B. The department shall develop, implement and
15 administer the pilot program created in Subsection A of this
16 section and may collaborate with other state agencies, members
17 of the business community, worker organizations, including
18 trade unions, appropriate nonprofit organizations and community
19 organizations, as deemed appropriate. In developing the pilot
20 program, the department shall:

21 (1) determine eligibility requirements for
22 applicants wishing to participate in the pilot program;
23 provided that eligibility shall require New Mexico residency
24 but shall not be restricted based on immigration status;

25 (2) determine processes, procedures and forms

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1 required for application to participate in the pilot program;

2 (3) determine processes and criteria for
3 approval of workforce training programs and for ongoing reviews
4 of those programs;

5 (4) determine processes and procedures,
6 including internal controls, interagency agreements or other
7 requirements, that may be necessary to use federal temporary
8 assistance for needy families block grant funds to provide
9 monetary stipends to participants;

10 (5) no later than October 1, 2024, determine
11 and recommend to the legislative education study committee
12 participant eligibility requirements and appropriate dollar
13 amounts for monetary stipends depending on factors, including a
14 participant's selected industry or field workforce training
15 program, income and education levels and any other relevant
16 factors deemed appropriate by the department; and

17 (6) no later than December 1, 2024, promulgate
18 and adopt rules for the administration of the pilot program."

19 SECTION 3. APPROPRIATION.--One million dollars
20 (\$1,000,000) is appropriated from the federal temporary
21 assistance for needy families block grant account to the higher
22 education department for expenditure in fiscal years 2025
23 through 2029 to develop and administer the New Mexico workforce
24 training economic support pilot program and to hire one full-
25 time-equivalent position to administer the program. Any

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1 unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of
2 fiscal year 2029 shall revert to the federal temporary
3 assistance for needy families block grant account.

4 SECTION 4. EFFECTIVE DATE.--The effective date of the
5 provisions of this act is July 1, 2024.

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