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AN ACT

RELATING TO SOCIAL SERVICES; CREATING A PILOT PROGRAM WITHIN  
THE HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT 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:

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

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

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

C. "workforce training program" means a training  
or educational program or other work-based learning program  
accredited by a state institution of higher learning, that,  
upon successful completion by a participant, the participant  
will earn a certification, license or credential or will have

1 acquired specialized qualifications or skills recognized  
2 within an industry or field as appropriate to obtain  
3 employment in that industry or field."

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

6 "NEW MEXICO WORKFORCE TRAINING ECONOMIC SUPPORT PILOT  
7 PROGRAM--CREATED--ADMINISTRATION--ELIGIBILITY--MONETARY  
8 STIPEND--RULES.--

9 A. The "New Mexico workforce training economic  
10 support pilot program" is created within the department as a  
11 three-year study. The department may use money appropriated  
12 to the department to pilot and evaluate the expansion of  
13 integrated basic education and skills training programs. The  
14 purpose of the pilot program is to:

15 (1) demonstrate that the state can  
16 measurably increase access to living wage jobs, thereby  
17 meeting the state's needs for jobs in high-demand industries  
18 and fields and reducing poverty, increasing financial  
19 stability and lowering dependence on government services for  
20 participants by providing ongoing economic support through  
21 monetary stipends during the period in which those  
22 participants are enrolled in and attending certain  
23 department-approved workforce training programs;

24 (2) develop and implement eligibility  
25 criteria for New Mexico residents to participate in the pilot

1 program. Criteria for consideration should include current  
2 income, education and employment status of applicants to the  
3 pilot program, and eligibility criteria shall not restrict  
4 participants based on immigration status;

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

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

17 (a) health care, including behavioral  
18 health;

19 (b) early childhood education or care;

20 (c) natural resources management;

21 (d) renewable energy;

22 (e) broadband expansion;

23 (f) first responders;

24 (g) construction industries;

25 (h) aerospace;

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- (i) biosciences;
- (j) cybersecurity;
- (k) film and television;
- (l) outdoor recreation;
- (m) sustainable agriculture;
- (n) intelligent manufacturing; and
- (o) global trade.

B. The department shall develop, implement and administer the pilot program created in Subsection A of this section and may receive technical assistance from the health care authority department and may collaborate with other state agencies, members of the business community, worker organizations, including trade unions, appropriate nonprofit organizations and community organizations, as deemed appropriate. In developing the pilot program, the department shall:

- (1) determine eligibility requirements for applicants wishing to participate in the pilot program; provided that eligibility shall require New Mexico residency but shall not be restricted based on immigration status;
- (2) determine processes, procedures and forms required for application to participate in the pilot program;
- (3) determine processes and criteria for approval of workforce training programs and for ongoing

1 reviews of those programs;

2 (4) no later than April 1, 2025, determine  
3 and recommend to the legislative finance committee  
4 participant eligibility requirements and appropriate dollar  
5 amounts for monetary stipends depending on factors, including  
6 a participant's selected industry or field workforce training  
7 program, income and education levels and any other relevant  
8 factors deemed appropriate by the department; provided that a  
9 monetary stipend shall not exceed one thousand dollars  
10 (\$1,000) per month for up to twelve months;

11 (5) no later than April 1, 2025, promulgate  
12 and adopt rules for the administration of the pilot program;  
13 and

14 (6) by December 1, 2025 and by December 1 of  
15 each subsequent calendar year, and in consultation with the  
16 health care authority department and any other appropriate  
17 state agency, provide a report to the legislative finance  
18 committee assessing the impact and outcomes of the pilot  
19 program and providing department recommendations."

20 **SECTION 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.**--The effective date of the  
21 provisions of this act is July 1, 2024. \_\_\_\_\_

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