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110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 620

To establish a demonstration project to train unemployed workers for employment as health care professionals, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 15, 2007

Mr. FEINGOLD (for himself and Ms. MIKULSKI) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

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A BILL

To establish a demonstration project to train unemployed workers for employment as health care professionals, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Community-Based Health Care Retraining Act''.

SEC. 2. HEALTH PROFESSIONS TRAINING DEMONSTRATION PROJECT.

Section 171 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2916) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(e) HEALTH PROFESSIONS TRAINING DEMONSTRATION PROJECT.—

"(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

"(A) COVERED COMMUNITY.—The term 'covered community' means a community or region that—

"(i) has experienced a significant percentage decline in positions in the manufacturing or service sectors; and

"(ii) is determined by the Secretary of Health and Human Services (in consultation with the medical community) to be an area with a shortage of health care professionals described in clause (i) or (ii) of subparagraph (C).

"(B) COVERED WORKER.—The term 'covered worker' means an individual who—

"(i)(I) has been terminated or laid off, or who has received a notice of termination or layoff, from employment in a manufacturing or service sector;

"(II)(aa) is eligible for or has exhausted entitlement to unemployment compensation; or

"(bb) has been employed for a duration sufficient to demonstrate, to the appropriate entity at a one-stop center referred to in section 134(c), attachment to the workforce, but is not eligible for unemployment compensation due to insufficient earnings or having performed services for an employer that were not covered under a State unemployment compensation law; and

"(III) is unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation; or

"(ii)(I) has been terminated or laid off, or has received a notice of termination or layoff, from employment in a manufacturing or service sector as a result of any permanent closure of, or any substantial layoff at, a plant, facility, or enterprise; or

"(II) is employed in a manufacturing or service sector at a facility at which the employer has made a general announce-

ment that such facility will close within 180 days.

"(C) HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL.—The term 'health care professional'—

"(i) means an individual who is involved with—

"(I) the delivery of health care services, or related services, pertaining to—

"(aa) the identification, evaluation, and prevention of diseases, disorders, or injuries; or

"(bb) home-based or community-based long-term care;

"(II) the delivery of dietary and nutrition services; or

"(III) rehabilitation and health systems management; and

"(ii) with respect to a covered community to be served through a grant made under paragraph (3), includes individuals in health care professions and jobs for which there is a shortage in the community, as determined by the Secretary of Health and Human Services (in consulta-

tion with the medical community), giving consideration to the amount of training time required to retrain the covered workers for the health care professions and jobs.

"(D) TRIBAL COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY.—The term 'tribal college or university' means—

"(i) a tribally controlled college or university, as defined in section 2 of the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act of 1978 (25 U.S.C. 1801);

"(ii) Diné College, authorized in the Navajo Community College Act (25 U.S.C. 640a et seq.); and

"(iii) any of the 1994 Institutions, as defined in section 532 of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note).

"(2) ESTABLISHMENT OF PROJECT.—In accordance with subsection (b), the Secretary shall establish and carry out a health professions training demonstration project.

"(3) GRANTS.—In carrying out the project, the Secretary, after consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall make grants to

eligible entities to enable the entities to carry out programs in covered communities to train covered workers for employment as health care professionals. The Secretary shall make each grant in an amount of not less than $100,000 and not more than $500,000.

"(4) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.—Notwithstanding subsection (b)(2)(B), to be eligible to receive a grant under this subsection to carry out a program in a covered community, an entity shall be a partnership that is—

"(A) under the direction of a local workforce investment board established under section 117 that is serving the covered community; and

"(B) composed of members serving the covered community, such as—

"(i) an institution of higher education that provides a 4-year program of instruction;

"(ii) an accredited community college;

"(iii) an accredited vocational or technical school;

"(iv) a tribal college or university;

"(v) a health clinic or hospital;

"(vi) a home-based or community-based long-term care facility or program; or

"(vii) a health care facility administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

"(5) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible to receive a grant under this subsection, an entity shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require, including, at a minimum—

"(A) a proposal to use the grant funds to establish or expand a training program in order to train covered workers for employment as health care professionals (including paraprofessionals);

"(B) information demonstrating the need for the training and support services to be provided through the program;

"(C) information describing the manner in which the entity will expend the grant funds, and the activities to be carried out with the funds;

"(D) information demonstrating that the entity meets the requirements of paragraph (4); and

"(E) with respect to training programs carried out by the applicant, information—

"(i) on the graduation rates of the programs involved;

"(ii) on the retention measures carried out by the applicant;

"(iii) on the length of time necessary to complete the training programs of the applicant; and

"(iv) on the number of qualified covered workers that are refused admittance into the training programs because of lack of capacity.

"(6) SELECTION.—In making grants under paragraph (3), the Secretary, after consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, shall—

"(A) consider the information submitted by the eligible entities under paragraph (5)(E); and

"(B) select—

"(i) eligible entities submitting applications that meet such criteria as the Secretary of Labor determines to be appropriate; and

"(ii) among such entities, the eligible entities serving the covered communities with the greatest need for the grants and the greatest potential to benefit from the grants.

"(7) USE OF FUNDS.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—An entity that receives a grant under this subsection shall use the funds made available through the grant for training and support services that meet the needs described in the application submitted under paragraph (5), which may include—

"(i) increasing capacity, subject to subparagraph (B), at an educational institution or training center to train individuals for employment as health professionals, such as by—

"(I) expanding a facility, subject to subparagraph (B);

"(II) expanding course offerings;

"(III) hiring faculty;

"(IV) providing a student loan repayment program for the faculty;

"(V) establishing or expanding clinical education opportunities;

"(VI) purchasing equipment, such as computers, books, clinical supplies, or a patient simulator; or

"(VII) conducting recruitment; or

"(ii) providing support services for covered workers participating in the training, such as—

"(I) providing tuition assistance;

"(II) establishing or expanding distance education programs;

"(III) providing transportation assistance; or

"(IV) providing child care.

"(B) LIMITATION.—To be eligible to use the funds to expand a facility, the eligible entity shall demonstrate to the Secretary in an application submitted under paragraph (5) that the entity can increase the capacity described in subparagraph (A)(i) of such facility only by expanding the facility.

"(8) FUNDING.—Of the amounts appropriated to, and available at the discretion of, the Secretary or the Secretary of Health and Human Services for programmatic and administrative expenditures, a

total of $25,000,000 shall be used to establish and carry out the demonstration project described in paragraph (2) in accordance with this subsection.''.

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