

SENATE BILL NO. 493—COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INTERIM
STUDY CONCERNING COMMUNITY COLLEGES)

MARCH 23, 2015

Referred to Committee on Education

SUMMARY—Establishes a program for awarding STEM
workforce challenge grants. (BDR 34-594)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No.

Effect on the State: Contains Appropriation not included
in Executive Budget.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in ***bolded italics*** is new; matter between brackets ~~for mitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

AN ACT relating to economic development; creating the STEM
Workforce Challenge Grant Fund; creating the Committee
to Oversee the STEM Workforce Challenge Grant Fund;
providing for the Committee to award grants from the
Fund to certain consortia of community colleges and state
colleges, nonprofit organizations and private businesses;
authorizing the Committee to award a grant only if 100
percent of the amount of the grant is matched; making an
appropriation; and providing other matters properly
relating thereto.

Legislative Counsel's Digest:

This bill establishes a program for awarding matching grants to support the
development and implementation of programs intended to enable this State to meet
the postsecondary education and skills training needs of industries which require
workers to be educated and skilled in the academic disciplines of science,
technology, engineering and mathematics, known as STEM industries.

Section 7 of this bill creates the STEM Workforce Challenge Grant Fund. The
Fund is administered by the Committee to Oversee the STEM Workforce Challenge
Grant Fund. **Section 8** of this bill creates the Committee and establishes its
composition.

The Committee is authorized to award matching grants from the Fund pursuant
to **section 9** of this bill. Money from a grant must be used to support the
development and implementation of programs intended to enable this State to meet
the postsecondary education and skills training needs of workers in STEM



industries in this State. Any regional consortium of community colleges or state colleges, nonprofit organizations and private businesses in a STEM industry operating in this State may apply for a grant from the Fund. The Committee must evaluate grant applications using criteria prescribed in **section 9** and must grade the applications on a points system. Applications providing for a community college or state college to be the lead organization in the consortium must be awarded additional points. **Section 9** also provides additional criteria which the Committee may consider when evaluating applications.

The Committee may award a grant from the Fund only if 100 percent of the grant is matched by money provided by any combination of private businesses and nonprofit organizations. A grant may be for not more than \$175,000 per year, and not more than \$350,000 total, for a 2-year period.

Section 10 of this bill appropriates \$3,500,000 from the State General Fund to the STEM Workforce Challenge Grant Fund.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN
SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Chapter 396 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto the provisions set forth as sections 2 to 9, inclusive, of this act.

Sec. 2. *As used in sections 2 to 9, inclusive, of this act, unless the context otherwise requires, the words and terms defined in sections 3, 4 and 5 of this act have the meanings ascribed to them in those sections.*

Sec. 3. *“Committee” means the Committee to Oversee the STEM Workforce Challenge Grant Fund created by section 8 of this act.*

Sec. 4. *“Fund” means the STEM Workforce Challenge Grant Fund created by section 7 of this act.*

Sec. 5. *“STEM industry” means an industry which requires workers who are educated and skilled in the disciplines of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.*

Sec. 6. *The Legislature hereby finds and declares that:*

1. The STEM industries represent an important source of high-value economic activity in this State and quality jobs for Nevadans;

2. This State suffers from a critical skills gap in its workforce and the lack of a strong pipeline system to prepare individuals for careers in emerging STEM industries;

3. The enhancement of postsecondary education and skills training required for workers in the STEM industries must be encouraged; and

4. The creation of a program that enables the State to maximize its return on public investment in postsecondary education and skills training required for workers in the STEM industries, and to provide a strong incentive for postsecondary



education and skills training that matches the needs of labor markets in this State, is critical to the continued economic development of this State.

Sec. 7. 1. The STEM Workforce Challenge Grant Fund is hereby created.

2. The Committee shall administer the Fund.

3. The Fund consists of:

(a) All money appropriated by the Legislature.

(b) All money received from any other source for the purposes of the Fund.

4. The interest and income earned on the money in the Fund, after deducting any applicable charges, must be credited to the Fund.

5. The Fund is a continuing fund, and its money does not revert to the State General Fund at any time.

Sec. 8. 1. The Committee to Oversee the STEM Workforce Challenge Grant Fund is hereby created.

2. The Committee consists of the following seven members:

(a) Two members appointed by the Chancellor of the System.

(b) Two members appointed by the Executive Director of the Office of Economic Development.

(c) Two members appointed by the Director of the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation.

(d) One member appointed by the Governor who is a representative of a qualified nonprofit collaborative that is qualified pursuant to NRS 701B.921.

3. If the Chancellor, Executive Director or Director appoints himself or herself to serve on the Committee pursuant to paragraph (a), (b) or (c) of subsection 2, as applicable, and is unable to attend a meeting of the Committee, he or she may authorize an alternate to attend the meeting on his or her behalf.

4. Each member of the Committee:

(a) Serves a term of 2 years;

(b) Except as otherwise provided in paragraph (c), may be reappointed by the appointing authority; and

(c) May not serve more than 2 consecutive terms.

5. A vacancy on the Committee must be filled by the appointing authority in the same manner as the original appointment.

6. At the first regular meeting of each odd-numbered year, the members of the Committee shall elect a Chair and a Vice Chair by majority vote who shall serve until the next Chair or Vice Chair is selected. If a vacancy occurs in the Chair, the members of the Committee shall elect a member to fill the vacancy to serve for the unexpired term.



7. The Committee shall meet at least once every 3 months and may meet at such further times as deemed necessary by the Chair.

8. A majority of the members of the Committee constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business, and a majority of those members present at any meeting is sufficient for any official action taken by the Committee.

9. Each member of the Committee serves without compensation, except that each member is entitled to receive:

(a) The per diem allowance and travel expenses provided for state officers and employees generally; and

(b) Reimbursement for any other actual and reasonable expenses incurred while performing his or her duties.

Sec. 9. 1. The Committee shall award grants from the Fund pursuant to this section.

2. Money from a grant awarded pursuant to this section must be used to support the development and implementation of programs intended to enable this State to meet the postsecondary education and skills training needs of workers in the STEM industries in this State.

3. Any regional consortium of community colleges or state colleges, nonprofit organizations and private businesses in a STEM industry operating in this State may apply for a grant pursuant to this section.

4. Subject to the provisions of subsection 6, the Committee may award a grant pursuant to this section to a consortium described in subsection 3 whose application:

(a) Provides a detailed description of the program, as described in subsection 2, to be developed and implemented by the consortium;

(b) Draws from data and market analysis and industry intelligence to identify specific current and projected workforce training challenges that the program described in paragraph (a) is intended to solve or otherwise alleviate and the manner in which the program will accomplish that goal;

(c) Demonstrates that the program described in paragraph (a) will be self-sustaining after the period for which the grant is provided;

(d) Designates an entity from among those in the consortium which will be the lead entity in implementing the program described in paragraph (a);

(e) Includes provisions for well-defined performance metrics and performance management to ensure evidence-based decision-making and accountability by the consortium in expending money from a grant in developing and implementing the program described in paragraph (a); and



(f) Indicates the source of the matching money required by subsection 6.

5. The Committee shall rank applications for a grant pursuant to this section using a points system prescribed by the Committee. The points system:

(a) Must award additional points to an application which designates a community college or state college as the lead entity, as described in paragraph (d) of subsection 4, in implementing the program described in paragraph (a) of that subsection; and

(b) May award additional points to an application which:

(1) Identifies potential cross-sector collaborations relating to the program described in paragraph (a) of subsection 4 among applicable community colleges and state colleges, STEM industry sector councils, area businesses in STEM industries and STEM industry organizations;

(2) Provides evidence of current or planned participation and leadership in the development and implementation of the program described in paragraph (a) of subsection 4 by area businesses in STEM industries and STEM industry organizations;

(3) Allows for leveraging of any existing or additional State or federal funding;

(4) Demonstrates that the program described in paragraph (a) of subsection 4 is a replicable program that can be transferred to other regions in this State or other STEM industry sectors; or

(5) Demonstrates that the program described in paragraph (a) of subsection 4 will provide postsecondary education and skills training required for workers in STEM industries to persons who are long-term unemployed, underemployed or otherwise in need of education or training to enter a new field of employment.

6. The Committee may award a grant pursuant to this section only if 100 percent of the amount of the grant is matched by money provided by any combination of private businesses and nonprofit organizations.

7. A grant awarded pursuant to this section may be for not more than \$175,000 per year, and not more than \$350,000 total, for a 2-year period.

Sec. 10. There is hereby appropriated from the State General Fund to the STEM Workforce Challenge Grant Fund created by section 7 of this act, the sum of \$3,500,000.

Sec. 11. This act becomes effective on July 1, 2015.

