

*The DOE National Labs Jobs ACCESS (Apprenticeships for Complete and Committed Employment of Specialized Skills) Act*

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Overview: This bill provides \$5 million in annual funding to the Department of Energy (DOE), in consultation with the Department of Labor's (DOL) Office of Apprenticeship, for the creation of grant programs that are designed specifically for the technical training needs of DOE's National Laboratories and the National Nuclear Security Administration production sites. These programs will create pathways and roadmaps for careers at these sites and will align the specific job skill demands with new apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs.

SECTION 1. Gives the bill the short title of the "DOE National Labs Jobs ACCESS Act".

SECTION 2. National Labs Jobs Access Program.

**Section (a)** states that within six months of this bill's passage the DOE, in consultation with the DOL will create a program to award 5-year grants to eligible entities for the Federal share of the cost to create technical skill-based preapprenticeship and apprenticeship programs that provide employer-driven or recognized credentials.

**Section (b)** states the requirements of a program funded by a grant. These programs should lead to recognized postsecondary credentials, focus on the skills needed for skilled-technician positions at National Labs and the NNSA, and create a registered apprenticeship or preapprenticeship program with either the DOL or the relevant State entity.

**Section (c)** describes the entities that are eligible to receive these grants. These entities are workforce intermediaries or eligible sponsors of a pre-apprenticeship or an apprenticeship program that fulfill the following requirements: demonstrated experience, recruitment ability, ability to provide recognized credentials, demonstrated success, and use of customized curriculums that encourage on-the-job training.

**Section (d)** states that an entity seeking a grant will submit an application to DOE.

**Section (e)** prioritizes the grant selection by the DOE for entities with the following characteristics: being a member in an industry partnership, providing training at an institute of higher education inclusive of STEM, being previously registered with the federal government, works to transition veterans and members of the Armed Forces to apprenticeship/preapprenticeship programs, receiving funding from or is operated by a State

agency, and plans to use the grant to train young adults or individuals with barriers to employment.

**Section (f)** encourages the Secretary to consider regional diversity while making grants.

**Section (g)** limits an entity to only one application during any one fiscal year.

**Section (h)** limits grant amounts to \$500,000 for any 24-month period of the 5-year grant period.

**Section (i)** mandates that the non-Federal share of the cost for a program carried out using a grant cannot be less than 25 percent of the total cost of the program.

**Section (j)** states that DOE can provide technical assistance to leverage knowledge from existing relevant programs at federal agencies.

**Section (k)** states that every 2 years, the DOL, with information from DOE, must submit a report to Congress every two years on the program that includes a description of grant recipients, their activities, and best practices. It should also include an assessment of the results achieved by the program that entails the rate of employment for participants after completion.

**Section (l)** lists relevant definitions, most of which follow previous statute. Eligible sponsors are defined as follows:

- Eligible Sponsors – a public organization or organization as defined by the IRS that administers an apprenticeship program through a partnership that can include a business, an industry association, a labor-management organization, a workforce development board, an institution of higher learning, the Armed Forces, a community-based organization, or an economic development agency. For preapprenticeship programs, the partnership can include a local educational agency, a secondary school, a technical education school, workforce development boards, or a community based organization. All partnerships would need approvals from the Department of Labor or the relevant State entity.
- Preapprenticeship – preapprenticeship as an initiative or set of strategies designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in an apprenticeship program carried out by an eligible sponsor that has a documented partnership with one or more sponsors of apprenticeship programs, includes training aligned with industry standards related to apprenticeships and is reviewed and approved annually by sponsors of apprenticeships within the documented partnership, and that will prepare individuals by teaching the skills and competencies needed to enter one or more apprenticeship programs. Such program must also include provision of hands-on training and theoretical education to individuals that is carried out in a manner that includes proper observation of supervision

and safety protocols and in a manner that does not displace a paid employee. Further, such program must include a formal agreement with a sponsor of an apprenticeship program that would enable participants who successfully complete the preapprenticeship program to enter directly into the apprenticeship program and includes agreements concerning earning credit towards the apprenticeship program.

**Section (m)** authorizes \$5,000,000 for the program for each fiscal year from 2020-2024.