

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

Amend the bill by striking out the title and substituting the following:

'An Act To Promote Workforce Development'

Amend the bill by striking out everything after the title and inserting the following:

'Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, due to Maine's aging population, the State faces a workforce shortage as an increasing number of workers are retiring and fewer people are available to replace them; and

Whereas, more workers need to be trained to meet the needs of Maine businesses with a skilled labor force; and

Whereas, the Competitive Skills Scholarship Program is one of the Department of Labor's job training programs specifically created to train workers for jobs in high-demand, high-wage careers with a dedicated source of funding; and

Whereas, the Department of Labor is limited in the amount of funding it can use to train eligible workers because of an annual cap on administration costs and the immediate removal of that cap would allow the department to provide more training to individuals within the current calendar year; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 26 MRSA §2033, sub-§2, as amended by PL 2013, c. 502, Pt. O, §1, is further amended to read:

2. Program established. The department shall establish and administer an employment training program known as the Competitive Skills Scholarship Program. The purpose of the program is to provide individuals with access to education, training and support leading to skilled, well-compensated jobs with anticipated high employment demand, to improve the economic well-being of the participants in the program and to provide employers with a skilled labor force in accordance with the provisions of this section.

The commissioner may expend funds through the department's career centers from the fund for the costs of education, training and support in accordance with subsection 6, for career counseling and for the administration of the program. Career counseling must include developing a plan and assisting a participant in accessing the support necessary for the participant to participate in the plan. The commissioner shall establish a limit on or a formula that limits the proportion of program funds that are

expended on career counseling and for administration; ~~except that, beginning with fiscal year 2014-15, the commissioner may not expend, on an annualized basis, more than \$550,000 of the annual revenue to the fund for administrative costs and for career counseling.~~

Sec. 2. 26 MRSA §2033, sub-§10, as enacted by PL 2007, c. 352, Pt. A, §3, is amended to read:

10. Monitoring, evaluation and annual report. The department shall implement a comprehensive evaluation strategy that evaluates the fund, using both quantitative and qualitative data and including an analysis of the return on investment in the fund. The evaluation must consider, at a minimum, the following factors: the value of total compensation, including, but not limited to, health insurance and other benefits to those participating in training; the impact of the program on the Unemployment Compensation Fund; the impact on productivity and performance for employers; and the impact on meeting the demand for skilled workers in industries in this State. The evaluation must measure the impact of the program over time, including a longitudinal analysis that captures productivity and other outcomes related to the program. The department must submit a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over labor matters by February 1st of each year on the status of the program and on the evaluation data collected and analyzed. The report also must include the formula or limit established by the commissioner pursuant to subsection 2 to limit the proportion of program funds expended on career counseling and administration and the amount of funds expended for these purposes.

Sec. 3. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

LABOR, DEPARTMENT OF

Employment Services Activity 0852

Initiative: Allocates funds for 2 limited-period CareerCenter Consultant positions to support efforts to provide job training for qualified individuals under the Competitive Skills Scholarship Program.

COMPETITIVE SKILLS SCHOLARSHIP FUND	2015-16	2016-17
Personal Services	\$60,495	\$120,990
All Other	\$13,833	\$28,072
COMPETITIVE SKILLS SCHOLARSHIP FUND TOTAL	\$74,328	\$149,062

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.'

SUMMARY

This amendment replaces the concept draft and changes the title. Current law requires the Commissioner of Labor to establish a limit on, or a formula to limit, funds expended on administrative and career counseling costs of the Competitive Skills Scholarship Program and caps such expenditures at \$550,000 annually. The amendment eliminates the cap and requires the Department of Labor to include

the limit or formula and the amount spent for such costs in its annual report to the Legislature on the program. The amendment adds an appropriations and allocations section.

FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED
(See attached)