

By: Representative Roberson

To: Education; Workforce  
Development

HOUSE BILL NO. 1621

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-73-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO  
2 REMOVE THE REQUIREMENT THAT ONLY NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED INDUSTRY  
3 CERTIFICATIONS RECOMMENDED BY THE STATE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT,  
4 WHICH MAY BE ATTAINED BY STUDENTS IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL SETTING,  
5 SHALL BE USED IN THE STATEWIDE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM AND DIPLOMA  
6 ENDORSEMENT REQUIREMENTS; TO AMEND SECTION 37-153-15, MISSISSIPPI  
7 CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION GRANT  
8 FUNDS MAY BE USED TO PURCHASE EQUIPMENT NEEDED FOR PROGRAMS  
9 IMPLEMENTED BY SCHOOL DISTRICTS THAT LEAD TO QUALIFYING INDUSTRY  
10 CERTIFICATIONS; TO REMOVE THE PROHIBITION ON THE USE OF SUCH GRANT  
11 FUNDS TO SUPPLANT FUNDS FOR THE BASIC OPERATION OF CAREER AND  
12 TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

13 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

14 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-73-7, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
15 amended as follows:

16 37-73-7. The State Workforce Investment Board, by and  
17 through the Office of Workforce Development, shall create, in  
18 consultation with the Mississippi Department of Education, the  
19 Mississippi Community College Board, the Mississippi State  
20 University Research and Curriculum Unit and other appropriate  
21 business and industry stakeholders, a single list of nationally  
22 recognized industry certifications \* \* \* for reimbursement under  
23 Section 37-153-15.



24           **SECTION 2.** Section 37-153-15, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
25 amended as follows:

26           37-153-15. (1) As used in this article:

27                   (a) The words "industry certification" mean a process  
28 through which students are assessed by an independent, third-party  
29 certifying entity using predetermined standards for knowledge,  
30 skills and competencies, resulting in the award of a credential  
31 that is nationally recognized and must be at least one (1) of the  
32 following:

33                           (i) Within an industry that addresses a critical  
34 local, regional or statewide economic need;

35                           (ii) Linked to an occupation that is included in  
36 the State Department of Employment Security's occupations in  
37 high-demand list; or

38                           (iii) Linked to an occupation that is identified  
39 as emerging.

40                   (b) The words "qualifying industry certification" mean  
41 an industry certification that is linked to an occupation with  
42 wages of at least seventy percent (70%) of the median state income  
43 unless the industry certification is stackable to another  
44 postsecondary or professional credential which is linked to an  
45 occupation which meets the wage criterion.

46           (2) The State Workforce Investment Board shall provide the  
47 State Board of Education annually with a list of qualifying  
48 industry certifications. If the occupations identified in the



list are not substantially the same as those occupations identified in the prior year, the State Board of Education shall provide reasonable notice of the changes to school districts.

(3) Beginning in fiscal year 2019-2020 and subject to available funding, the Department of Education shall pay a career and technical education incentive grant to the public school for each student enrolled in the public school who earns a qualifying industry certification. The amount per student for the career and technical education incentive grant shall be Six Hundred Dollars (\$600.00). If the statewide sum of the career and technical education incentive grants awarded pursuant to this section exceeds the amount of available funds appropriated for the grants, the grants per student shall be reduced proportionately to cover all eligible grants under this section. Any costs accrued during one (1) fiscal year may be claimed and reimbursed in the following fiscal year.

(4) The grants may be used for qualifying industry certification examination fees, professional development for teachers in career and technical education programs under this section, student instructional support for programs that lead to qualifying industry certifications \* \* \* to increase access to qualifying industry certifications, or to purchase equipment needed for programs that lead to qualifying industry certifications. Any grants awarded under this section may not be



used to supplant funds provided for the basic operation of the career and technical education programs.

(5) On or before October 1 of each year, the Department of Education, working in collaboration with the Office of Workforce Development and any other entities as necessary, shall submit a report to the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Chairmen of the House and Senate Education Committees, the Chairman of the House Workforce Development Committee and the Chairman of the Senate Economic and Workforce Development Committee on the following:

(a) The number of students who enrolled in a career and technical education course or program that leads to a qualifying industry certification.

(b) The number of students who earned a qualifying industry certification by certification.

(c) The amount of career and technical education incentive grants awarded by the school.

(d) The amount of career and technical education incentive grants awarded per student.

(e) Aggregated demographic data on the students who earned a qualifying industry certification, including the qualifying industry certifications earned by rural and urban students.

**SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2025.

