

By: Representative Roberson

To: Education; Workforce Development

HOUSE BILL NO. 1624

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-73-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 PROVIDE THAT THE SINGLE LIST OF NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED INDUSTRY
3 CERTIFICATIONS SHALL ONLY BE USED FOR REIMBURSEMENT UNDER SECTION
4 37-153-15 AND NOT IN THE MISSISSIPPI STATEWIDE ACCOUNTABILITY
5 SYSTEM OR IN DIPLOMA ENDORSEMENT REQUIREMENTS; TO PROVIDE THAT THE
6 STATE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD SHALL CREATE A SEPARATE LIST OF
7 NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED HIGH VALUE INDUSTRY CERTIFICATIONS FOR
8 PARTICIPANTS ENROLLED IN COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES; TO
9 REQUIRE, SUBJECT TO AVAILABLE FUNDING, THE MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITY
10 COLLEGE BOARD TO PAY A CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION INCENTIVE
11 GRANT TO CERTAIN COMMUNITY COLLEGES; TO AMEND SECTION 37-153-15,
12 MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT THE CAREER AND TECHNICAL
13 EDUCATION GRANTS MAY BE USED TO PURCHASE NEEDED EQUIPMENT; AND FOR
14 RELATED PURPOSES.

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

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

18 37-73-7. (1) The State Workforce Investment Board, by and
19 through the Office of Workforce Development, shall create, in
20 consultation with the Mississippi Department of Education, the
21 Mississippi Community College Board, the Mississippi State
22 University Research and Curriculum Unit and other appropriate
23 business and industry stakeholders, a single list of nationally

24 recognized industry certifications * * * for reimbursement under
25 Section 37-153-15.

26 (2) The State Workforce Investment Board, by and through the
27 Office of Workforce Development, shall create, in consultation
28 with the Mississippi Community College Board, the Mississippi
29 State University Research and Curriculum Unit and other
30 appropriate business and industry stakeholders, a separate list of
31 nationally recognized high value industry certifications for
32 participants enrolled at Mississippi Community and Junior Colleges
33 for reimbursement from the Mississippi Community College Board,
34 pending availability of funds. This list shall align with the
35 approved State Workforce Investment Board K-12 industry
36 certification list to encourage more students to connect their
37 secondary career preparatory work with postsecondary
38 opportunities.

39 (3) Subject to available funding beginning in fiscal year
40 2026, the Mississippi Community College Board shall pay a career
41 and technical education incentive grant to the community college
42 for each student enrolled in the community college who earns a
43 qualifying industry certification. The amount per student for the
44 career and technical education incentive grant shall be Six
45 Hundred Dollars (\$600.00). The Mississippi Community College
46 Board shall ensure that no college is reimbursed for a student
47 receiving certification that has already been obtained through any
48 secondary or postsecondary institution. If the statewide sum of



49 the career and technical education incentive grants awarded
50 pursuant to this section exceeds the amount of available funds
51 appropriated for the grants, the grants per student shall be
52 reduced proportionately to cover all eligible grants under this
53 section. Any costs accrued during one (1) fiscal year may be
54 claimed and reimbursed in the following fiscal year.

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

57 37-153-15. (1) As used in this article:

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

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

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

69 (iii) Linked to an occupation that is identified
70 as emerging.

71 (b) The words "qualifying industry certification" mean
72 an industry certification that is linked to an occupation with
73 wages of at least seventy percent (70%) of the median state income



74 unless the industry certification is stackable to another
75 postsecondary or professional credential which is linked to an
76 occupation which meets the wage criterion.

77 (2) The State Workforce Investment Board shall provide the
78 State Board of Education annually with a list of qualifying
79 industry certifications. If the occupations identified in the
80 list are not substantially the same as those occupations
81 identified in the prior year, the State Board of Education shall
82 provide reasonable notice of the changes to school districts.

83 (3) Beginning in fiscal year 2019-2020 and subject to
84 available funding, the Department of Education shall pay a career
85 and technical education incentive grant to the public school for
86 each student enrolled in the public school who earns a qualifying
87 industry certification. The amount per student for the career and
88 technical education incentive grant shall be Six Hundred Dollars
89 (\$600.00). If the statewide sum of the career and technical
90 education incentive grants awarded pursuant to this section
91 exceeds the amount of available funds appropriated for the grants,
92 the grants per student shall be reduced proportionately to cover
93 all eligible grants under this section. Any costs accrued during
94 one (1) fiscal year may be claimed and reimbursed in the following
95 fiscal year.

96 (4) The grants may be used for qualifying industry
97 certification examination fees, professional development for
98 teachers in career and technical education programs under this

99 section, student instructional support for programs that lead to
100 qualifying industry certifications, * * * to increase access to
101 qualifying industry certifications or to purchase needed
102 equipment. Any grants awarded under this section may not be used
103 to supplant funds provided for the basic operation of the career
104 and technical education programs.

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

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

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

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

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

122 (e) Aggregated demographic data on the students who
123 earned a qualifying industry certification, including the

124 qualifying industry certifications earned by rural and urban
125 students.

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

