

By: Senator(s) DeBar

To: Education;
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2348

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-73-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 REVISE THE STATE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD'S LIST OF NATIONALLY
3 RECOGNIZED INDUSTRY CERTIFICATIONS TO ENSURE REIMBURSEMENT FUNDS
4 ONLY APPLY TO CERTAIN PRIORITY SECTORS; TO BRING FORWARD SECTION
5 37-153-15, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH PROVIDES FOR CERTAIN
6 GRANT FUNDS, FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE AMENDMENT; AND FOR
7 RELATED PURPOSES.

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

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

11 37-73-7. The State Workforce Investment Board, by and
12 through the Office of Workforce Development, shall create, in
13 consultation with the Mississippi Department of Education, the
14 Mississippi Community College Board, the Mississippi State
15 University Research and Curriculum Unit and other appropriate
16 business and industry stakeholders, a single list of nationally
17 recognized industry certifications * * * for reimbursement under
18 Section 37-153-15.

19 **SECTION 2.** Section 37-153-15, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
20 brought forward as follows:



21 37-153-15. (1) As used in this article:

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

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

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

33 (iii) Linked to an occupation that is identified
34 as emerging.

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

41 (2) The State Workforce Investment Board shall provide the
42 State Board of Education annually with a list of qualifying
43 industry certifications. If the occupations identified in the
44 list are not substantially the same as those occupations



45 identified in the prior year, the State Board of Education shall
46 provide reasonable notice of the changes to school districts.

47 (3) Beginning in fiscal year 2019-2020 and subject to
48 available funding, the Department of Education shall pay a career
49 and technical education incentive grant to the public school for
50 each student enrolled in the public school who earns a qualifying
51 industry certification. The amount per student for the career and
52 technical education incentive grant shall be Six Hundred Dollars
53 (\$600.00). If the statewide sum of the career and technical
54 education incentive grants awarded pursuant to this section
55 exceeds the amount of available funds appropriated for the grants,
56 the grants per student shall be reduced proportionately to cover
57 all eligible grants under this section. Any costs accrued during
58 one (1) fiscal year may be claimed and reimbursed in the following
59 fiscal year.

60 (4) The grants may be used for qualifying industry
61 certification examination fees, professional development for
62 teachers in career and technical education programs under this
63 section, student instructional support for programs that lead to
64 qualifying industry certifications, or to increase access to
65 qualifying industry certifications. Any grants awarded under this
66 section may not be used to supplant funds provided for the basic
67 operation of the career and technical education programs.

68 (5) On or before October 1 of each year, the Department of
69 Education, working in collaboration with the Office of Workforce



70 Development and any other entities as necessary, shall submit a
71 report to the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of
72 the House of Representatives, the Chairmen of the House and Senate
73 Education Committees, the Chairman of the House Workforce
74 Development Committee and the Chairman of the Senate Economic and
75 Workforce Development Committee on the following:

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

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

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

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

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

89 **SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
90 and after July 1, 2024.

