

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 4730

To amend the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 to establish a pilot program to provide competitive grants to land-grant colleges and universities to facilitate research and rapid workforce development and promote entrepreneurship and other benefits to communities, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

AUGUST 2, 2022

Mr. HICKENLOOPER (for himself and Mrs. FISCHER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

A BILL

To amend the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 to establish a pilot program to provide competitive grants to land-grant colleges and universities to facilitate research and rapid workforce development and promote entrepreneurship and other benefits to communities, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “National Innovation
3 and Modern Skills Training Act of 2022”.

4 **SEC. 2. NATIONAL INNOVATION AND MODERN SKILLS**
5 **TRAINING COMPETITIVE GRANT PILOT PRO-**
6 **GRAM.**

7 The National Agricultural Research, Extension, and
8 Teaching Policy Act of 1977 is amended by inserting after
9 section 1418 (7 U.S.C. 3153) the following:

10 **“SEC. 1419. NATIONAL INNOVATION AND MODERN SKILLS**
11 **TRAINING COMPETITIVE GRANT PILOT PRO-**
12 **GRAM.**

13 “(a) DEFINITION OF LAND-GRANT COLLEGE OR
14 UNIVERSITY.—In this section, the term ‘land-grant college
15 or university’ includes a 1994 Institution (as defined in
16 section 532 of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Sta-
17 tus Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note; Public Law 103–
18 382)).

19 “(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall estab-
20 lish a pilot program (referred to in this section as the
21 ‘pilot program’) to award competitive grants to land-grant
22 colleges and universities to carry out activities described
23 in subsection (c).

24 “(c) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—

25 “(1) IN GENERAL.—A land-grant college or uni-
26 versity that receives a grant under the pilot program

1 shall use the grant funds to establish a statewide
2 program, in cooperation with cooperative extension
3 services and industry experts, to facilitate research
4 and rapid workforce development and promote entre-
5 preneurship and other benefits to communities
6 across the applicable State.

7 “(2) WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, RESEARCH,
8 AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMS.—

9 “(A) IN GENERAL.—A statewide program
10 established under paragraph (1) shall be com-
11 posed of 1 or more workforce development, re-
12 search, or entrepreneurship programs, which
13 shall—

14 “(i) be provided through cooperative
15 extension services, in partnership with 1 or
16 more colleges or universities in the applica-
17 ble geographic area;

18 “(ii) be administered by the applicable
19 land-grant college or university; and

20 “(iii) confer to a participant a meas-
21 urable benefit or credential on successful
22 completion of the program.

23 “(B) WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PRO-
24 GRAMS.—A workforce development program es-
25 tablished under subparagraph (A) shall—

1 “(i) offer flexible and alternative edu-
 2 cational pathways to promote workforce
 3 development, including—

4 “(I) stackable credentials;

5 “(II) micro degrees;

6 “(III) boot camps; or

7 “(IV) credit-by-examination pro-
 8 grams; and

9 “(ii) focus on the middle- and high-
 10 skilled jobs needed in the economy, includ-
 11 ing local and remote work opportunities,
 12 with an emphasis on the unemployed and
 13 underemployed, through rapid upskilling,
 14 registered apprenticeships, and mentorship
 15 opportunities.

16 “(C) RESEARCH PROGRAMS.—A research
 17 program established under subparagraph (A)—

18 “(i) may be tailored to support the
 19 needs of regional attributes, workforce
 20 needs, and economic development goals;
 21 and

22 “(ii) shall—

23 “(I) immerse participants in
 24 emerging science, technology, engi-
 25 neering, and mathematics fields and

technologies such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, advanced computing, advanced manufacturing, 3D technology and printing, data management and use, digital technologies, biotechnology, health information technology, agricultural technology, advanced telecommunications, and robotics;

“(II) be tailored to support—

“(aa) the needs of large industry partners and their innovation pipelines;

“(bb) regional attributes; or

“(cc) economic development goals;

“(III) consist of research conducted by the land-grant college or university in partnership with the applicable community; and

“(IV) include the provision of match-funded research grants to local community members—

“(aa) to conduct research led by the land-grant college or

1 university under subclause (III);
 2 and

3 “(bb) to submit to faculty of
 4 the land-grant college or univer-
 5 sity or staff of the cooperative ex-
 6 tension service quarterly reports
 7 describing findings of the re-
 8 search conducted under item
 9 (aa), which may be shared with
 10 private sector providers of
 11 grants.

12 “(D) ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMS.—
 13 An entrepreneurship program established under
 14 subparagraph (A)—

15 “(i) shall focus on—

16 “(I) the strengths of local histor-
 17 ical industries;

18 “(II) the modern globalized
 19 versions of those industries;

20 “(III) the innovation opportuni-
 21 ties within those industries;

22 “(IV) the needs of the commu-
 23 nity; and

24 “(V) the variety of localized in-
 25 dustries in the region; and

1 “(ii) may focus on creating an entre-
 2 preneurial environment, professional net-
 3 work, mentoring, and other resources to
 4 develop strong entrepreneurial ecosystems
 5 and small businesses—

6 “(I) to spur economic develop-
 7 ment in underrepresented commu-
 8 nities; and

9 “(II) to develop the next genera-
 10 tion of entrepreneurs across the
 11 United States.

12 “(E) COLLABORATION.—In carrying out a
 13 workforce development, research, or entrepre-
 14 neurship program under this paragraph, a land-
 15 grant college or university is encouraged to col-
 16 laborate with private-sector partners, workforce
 17 development boards, other institutions of higher
 18 education, and local leaders to develop pro-
 19 grams that—

20 “(i) meet the professional and social
 21 needs of the applicable community; and

22 “(ii) address areas of national impor-
 23 tance or need.

24 “(d) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible for a grant under
 25 the pilot program, a land-grant college or university—

1 “(1) shall submit to the Secretary an applica-
 2 tion at such time, in such manner, and containing
 3 such information as the Secretary may require, in-
 4 cluding—

5 “(A) a demonstration of the availability of
 6 matching funding from the private sector equal
 7 to the amount of the grant to carry out activi-
 8 ties under the pilot program;

9 “(B) a 12-month plan that defines out-
 10 come goals under the pilot program for work-
 11 force, entrepreneurship, and research focuses;
 12 and

13 “(C) a demonstration of community en-
 14 gagement or community partners;

15 “(2) may submit an application under para-
 16 graph (1) jointly with 1 or more other land-grant
 17 colleges or universities in the same State; and

18 “(3) shall be subject to an evaluation, including
 19 metrics, relating to the performance of the land-
 20 grant college or university under the pilot program.

21 “(e) SELECTION OF RECIPIENTS.—The Secretary
 22 shall provide grants under the pilot program—

23 “(1) to land-grant colleges or universities in 10
 24 States, including not more than 1 land-grant college
 25 or university in any State, unless 2 or more land-

1 grant colleges or universities in a State submit a
 2 joint application in accordance with subsection
 3 (d)(2); and

4 “(2) taking into consideration—

5 “(A) regional and geographic diversity; and

6 “(B) the capacity of a land-grant college or
 7 university to engage industry, the workforce,
 8 and other organizations.

9 “(f) AMOUNT AND DURATION.—A grant under the
 10 pilot program shall be—

11 “(1) in the amount of \$5,000,000; and

12 “(2) provided over a 3-year period.

13 “(g) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR.—

14 The Secretary may appoint an Economic Development Co-
 15 ordinator—

16 “(1) to work with recipients of grants under
 17 this section; and

18 “(2) to coordinate efforts with cooperative ex-
 19 tension services.

20 “(h) COORDINATION.—In carrying out the pilot pro-
 21 gram, the Secretary shall coordinate with—

22 “(1) the Secretary of Commerce;

23 “(2) the Secretary of Labor;

24 “(3) the Secretary of Education;

1 “(4) the Administrator of the Small Business
2 Administration; and

3 “(5) the Director of the National Science Foun-
4 dation.

5 “(i) REPORTS.—

6 “(1) ECONOMIC IMPACT REPORTS.—Not later
7 than 180 days after the end of the period of a grant
8 under the pilot program, the recipient of the grant
9 shall submit to the Secretary a report describing the
10 economic impacts of activities carried out using the
11 grant.

12 “(2) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than
13 180 days after the Secretary receives the report
14 under paragraph (1) from the last recipient of a
15 grant under the pilot program, the Secretary shall
16 submit to Congress a report describing the economic
17 impacts of activities carried out using grants under
18 the pilot program, based on the reports submitted to
19 the Secretary under paragraph (1).”.

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