

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 940

To amend title 49, United States Code, to establish a National Transit Frontline Workforce Training Center, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 24, 2021

Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

A BILL

To amend title 49, United States Code, to establish a National Transit Frontline Workforce Training Center, 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,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “National Transit
5 Frontline Workforce Training Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. NATIONAL TRANSIT FRONTLINE WORKFORCE**
7 **TRAINING CENTER.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 5314(b) of title 49,
9 United States Code, is amended—

1 (1) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the
 2 following:

3 “(2) NATIONAL TRANSIT FRONTLINE WORK-
 4 FORCE TRAINING CENTER.—

5 “(A) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph:

6 “(i) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ‘Ad-
 7 ministrator’ means the Administrator of
 8 the Federal Transit Administration.

9 “(ii) CENTER.—The term ‘Center’
 10 means the National Transit Frontline
 11 Workforce Training Center established
 12 under subparagraph (B).

13 “(iii) HUMAN CAPITAL.—The term
 14 ‘human capital’ means any knowledge, tal-
 15 ent, skill, ability, experience, intelligence,
 16 training, judgment, or wisdom possessed,
 17 individually or collectively, by the transit
 18 frontline workforce (including operations,
 19 maintenance, and administrative per-
 20 sonnel).

21 “(B) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary
 22 shall—

23 “(i) establish a center, to be known as
 24 the ‘National Transit Frontline Workforce
 25 Training Center’, to meet the needs of the

1 rural and urban transit system frontline
2 workforce through standards-based train-
3 ing relating to relevant maintenance and
4 operations occupations; and

5 “(ii) evaluate, and provide a grant to,
6 a nonprofit organization with demonstrated
7 capacity to develop and provide transit ca-
8 reer ladder programs through labor-man-
9 agement partnerships and apprenticeships,
10 on a nationwide basis, to carry out the du-
11 ties of the Center described in subpara-
12 graph (C).

13 “(C) DUTIES.—

14 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The Center, in co-
15 operation with the Administrator, transit
16 authorities, and other appropriate individ-
17 uals and entities, shall develop and carry
18 out training and educational programs for
19 public transportation employees serving in
20 the frontline workforce.

21 “(ii) TRAINING AND EDUCATIONAL
22 PROGRAM INCLUSIONS.—The training and
23 educational programs developed under
24 clause (i) may include courses in recent de-

1 developments, techniques, and procedures re-
 2 lating to—

3 “(I) developing consensus na-
 4 tional training standards, in partner-
 5 ship with industry stakeholders, for
 6 key frontline occupations with dem-
 7 onstrated skill gaps;

8 “(II) developing national systems
 9 of qualification and apprenticeship for
 10 transit maintenance and operations
 11 occupations;

12 “(III) establishing local, regional,
 13 and statewide transit training part-
 14 nerships—

15 “(aa) to identify and ad-
 16 dress workforce skill gaps; and

17 “(bb) to develop skills need-
 18 ed for—

19 “(AA) delivering quality
 20 transit service; and

21 “(BB) supporting em-
 22 ployee career advancement;

23 “(IV) developing programs for
 24 the training of the frontline work-
 25 force, instructors, mentors, and labor-

1 management partnership representa-
2 tives, in the form of classroom, hands-
3 on, on-the-job, and internet web-based
4 training, to be delivered—

5 “(aa) at a national center;

6 “(bb) regionally; or

7 “(cc) at an individual transit
8 agency;

9 “(V) developing training pro-
10 grams for skills relating to existing
11 and emerging transit technologies,
12 such as zero-emission buses;

13 “(VI) developing improved capac-
14 ity for safety, security, and emergency
15 preparedness in local transit systems
16 and the industry as a whole
17 through—

18 “(aa) developing the role of
19 the frontline workforce in estab-
20 lishing and sustaining safety cul-
21 ture and safety systems in—

22 “(AA) the industry; and

23 “(BB) individual public
24 transportation systems; and

1 “(bb) training to address
2 frontline workforce roles in pro-
3 moting health and safety for
4 transit workers and the riding
5 public;

6 “(VII) developing local transit
7 capacity for career pathway partner-
8 ships with schools and other commu-
9 nity organizations for recruiting and
10 training underrepresented populations
11 as successful transit employees who
12 can develop careers in the transit in-
13 dustry; and

14 “(VIII) in collaboration with the
15 Administrator, conducting and dis-
16 seminating research—

17 “(aa) to provide transit
18 workforce job projections and
19 identify training needs and gaps;

20 “(bb) to determine the most
21 cost-effective methods for transit
22 workforce training and develop-
23 ment, including return-on-invest-
24 ment analysis;

1 “(cc) to identify the most ef-
 2 fective methods for implementing
 3 successful safety systems and a
 4 positive safety culture;

5 “(dd) to promote transit
 6 workforce best practices for
 7 achieving cost-effective, quality,
 8 safe, and reliable public transpor-
 9 tation services; and

10 “(ee) to provide culturally
 11 competent training and education
 12 programs to all participants, re-
 13 gardless of gender, sexual ori-
 14 entation, or gender identity, in-
 15 cluding participants with limited
 16 English proficiency, diverse cul-
 17 tural and ethnic backgrounds,
 18 and disabilities.

19 “(D) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall
 20 coordinate the activities of the Center under
 21 this paragraph, to the maximum extent prac-
 22 ticable, with—

23 “(i) the Office of Career, Technical,
 24 and Adult Education of the Department of
 25 Education; and

1 “(ii) the Office of Apprenticeship of
2 the Department of Labor.

3 “(E) NATIONAL TRANSIT DATABASE.—For
4 the purposes of carrying out this section, the
5 Secretary shall require the collection, through
6 the National Transit Database, on an annual
7 basis, of additional data relating to human cap-
8 ital, in accordance with such requirements re-
9 lating to the collection and definition of those
10 data as the Secretary may establish, in coordi-
11 nation with relevant transportation sector indi-
12 viduals and entities.

13 “(F) USE OF OTHER GRANT AMOUNTS FOR
14 CENTER-RELATED ACTIVITIES.—

15 “(i) IN GENERAL.—Of the amounts
16 made available to the recipient of a grant
17 under section 5307, 5337, or 5339, the re-
18 cipient may use not more than 0.5 percent,
19 with the approval of the Secretary, to pay
20 an amount equal to not more than 80 per-
21 cent of the cost of an activity described in
22 subparagraph (C).

23 “(ii) EXISTING PROGRAMS.—A recipi-
24 ent referred to in clause (i) may use the
25 amounts described in that clause to carry

out an existing local education or training
 program for public transportation employ-
 ees supported by—

“(I) the Secretary;

“(II) the Department of Labor;

or

“(III) the Department of Edu-
 cation.”;

(2) in paragraph (3), by striking “or (2)”; and

(3) by striking paragraph (4).

(b) DATA REQUIRED TO BE REPORTED IN NA-
 TIONAL TRANSIT DATABASE.—Section 5335(c) of title 49,
 United States Code, is amended by inserting “relating to
 human capital (as defined in section 5314(b)(2)(A)) or
 physical capital” before the period at the end.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section
 5338(c) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “There are” and inserting the
 following:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—There is”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) NATIONAL TRANSIT FRONTLINE WORK-
 FORCE TRAINING CENTER.—There is authorized to
 be appropriated to carry out section 5314(b)(2)

- 1 \$12,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2021 through
- 2 2025.”.

