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H.B. No. 2784

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT

2 relating to the creation of the Texas Industrial Workforce
3 Apprenticeship Grant Program.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

5 SECTION 1. Chapter 302, Labor Code, is amended by adding
6 Subchapter I to read as follows:

7 SUBCHAPTER I. TEXAS INDUSTRIAL WORKFORCE APPRENTICESHIP GRANT
8 PROGRAM

9 Sec. 302.251. PURPOSE. The purpose of the Texas Industrial
10 Workforce Apprenticeship Grant Program is to address the immediate
11 industrial workforce needs of this state resulting from the impact
12 of Hurricane Harvey and overall workforce shortages.

13 Sec. 302.252. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

14 (1) "Apprenticeship program" means a training program
15 that:

16 (A) provides on-the-job training, preparatory
17 instruction, supplementary instruction, or related instruction in
18 a trade that has been recognized as an apprenticeable occupation by
19 the Office of Apprenticeship of the United States Department of
20 Labor; or

21 (B) is certified as an industry-recognized
22 apprenticeship program by a third-party certifier that has received
23 from the United States Department of Labor a favorable
24 determination of qualification to award that certification.

1 (2) "Person" does not include a governmental entity.

2 Sec. 302.253. PROGRAM. The commission shall establish and
3 administer the Texas Industrial Workforce Apprenticeship Grant
4 Program to encourage the private sector to develop specialized
5 industrial workforce apprenticeship programs in this state. Under
6 the program, the commission shall provide grants for persons who
7 meet the requirements of Section 302.255.

8 Sec. 302.254. TEXAS INDUSTRIAL WORKFORCE APPRENTICESHIP
9 FUND. (a) The Texas industrial workforce apprenticeship fund is a
10 dedicated account in the general revenue fund.

11 (b) The following amounts shall be deposited in the fund:

12 (1) money appropriated by the legislature for the fund
13 for purposes described by this subchapter;

14 (2) interest earned on the investment of money in the
15 fund; and

16 (3) gifts, grants, and other donations received for
17 the fund.

18 (c) The fund may be used only for an apprenticeship program
19 that meets the requirements of Section 302.255.

20 Sec. 302.255. APPLICATION; ELIGIBILITY FOR GRANT. To be
21 eligible to receive a grant under this subchapter, a person must:

22 (1) if the person is an entity, be in good standing
23 under the laws of the state in which the person was formed or
24 organized, as evidenced by a certificate issued by the secretary of
25 state or the state official of another state having custody of the
26 records pertaining to a person formed or organized under the laws of
27 that state;

1 (2) not owe delinquent taxes to a taxing unit of this
2 state; and

3 (3) have in place an apprenticeship program that:

4 (A) provides on-the-job training under an
5 industry-recognized, accredited training curriculum;

6 (B) guarantees employment for participants
7 during and on successful completion of the training period;

8 (C) pays each participant at least \$15 per hour
9 during the training period and provides eligibility for
10 participants to receive full-time employee benefits during and on
11 successful completion of the training period;

12 (D) requires participants to advance their
13 skills, at a minimum, to a credentialed, performance-verified
14 mid-level status in the field related to the apprenticeship
15 program;

16 (E) has a duration of not more than 26 weeks; and

17 (F) gives preference to training and hiring:

18 (i) unemployed Texans who have filed with
19 the commission;

20 (ii) veterans of the United States armed
21 forces;

22 (iii) formerly incarcerated individuals;

23 and

24 (iv) underemployed individuals who are
25 working without industry-recognized certifications or other
26 credentials.

27 Sec. 302.256. LIMITATIONS ON GRANT AMOUNT. The amount of a

1 grant awarded under this subchapter may not exceed the lesser of
2 \$10,000 per apprenticeship program participant or the cost of
3 training, not including wages and benefits.

4 Sec. 302.257. REQUIREMENTS; GRANT AWARD. (a) The
5 commission shall distribute the grant funds on an individualized
6 basis as a reimbursement for training costs incurred by grant
7 recipients in accordance with Section 302.256.

8 (b) Before awarding a grant to a person under this
9 subchapter, the commission must determine that a sufficient number
10 of apprenticeship program participants have:

11 (1) completed the program and achieved the training
12 requirements specified by Section 302.255(3)(D); and

13 (2) maintained available and suitable employment for a
14 period of not less than six months.

15 (c) The commission by rule may develop the criteria for
16 making the determinations required by Subsection (b).

17 Sec. 302.258. PROGRAM RULES. (a) The commission shall
18 adopt rules to administer and enforce this subchapter.

19 (b) The commission shall post the rules on its Internet
20 website.

21 Sec. 302.259. ANNUAL REPORT. (a) Not later than December
22 1 of each year, the commission shall submit to the lieutenant
23 governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and the
24 members of the legislature a report on grants made under this
25 subchapter that states:

26 (1) the number of direct jobs each grant recipient
27 created in this state in each job category of the federal Equal

1 Employment Opportunity Commission's job classification guide;

2 (2) the median wage of the jobs each grant recipient
3 created in this state;

4 (3) the total amount of each grant awarded to a grant
5 recipient; and

6 (4) the number and categorization of apprenticeship
7 program participants trained and employed by each grant recipient
8 under Section 302.255(3)(F).

9 (b) The report may not include information that is made
10 confidential by law.

11 (c) The commission may require a grant recipient under this
12 subchapter to submit, on a form provided by the commission,
13 information required to complete the report.

14 (d) The commission shall post the annual report on its
15 Internet website.

16 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.