

SB 5254-S - DIGEST

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

Finds that a skilled work force is essential for employers and job seekers to compete in today's global economy. The engines of economic progress are fueled by education and training.

Finds that industry skill panels are a critical and proven form of public-private partnership that harness the expertise of leaders in business, labor, and education to identify work force development strategies for industries that drive Washington's regional economies. Industry skill panels foster innovation and enable industry leaders and public partners to be proactive, addressing changing needs for businesses quickly and strategically. Industry skill panels leverage small state investments with private sector investments to ensure that public resources are better aligned with industry needs.

Declares an intent to support the development and maintenance of industry skill panels in key sectors of the economy as an efficient and effective way to support regional economic development.

Provides that, subject to funding provided for the purposes of this act, the board, in consultation with the state board for community and technical colleges, the department of community, trade, and economic development, and the employment security department, shall allocate grants on a competitive basis to establish and support industry skill panels.

Requires the board to establish industry skill panel standards that identify the expectations for industry skill panel products and services. The board shall establish the standards in consultation with labor, the state board for community and technical colleges, the employment security department, the institute of workforce development and economic sustainability, and the department of community, trade, and economic development. Continued funding of particular industry skill panels shall be based on meeting the standards established by the board under this act. Beginning December 1, 2008, the board shall report annually to the governor and the economic development and higher education committees of the legislature on the results of the industry skill panels funded under chapter 28C.18 RCW in meeting the standards.