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## Higher Education Committee

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### SSB 5713

**Brief Description:** Creating the skilled worker outreach, recruitment, and career awareness training program.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Senators Palumbo, Wilson, Zeiger and King).

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Brief Summary of Substitute Bill</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creates a grant program to increase the state's skilled workforce by awarding matching grants to applicants who engage in outreach, recruitment, and skilled worker awareness training.</li></ul>
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**Hearing Date:** 3/21/17

**Staff:** Trudes Tango (786-7384).

**Background:**

The Department of Commerce (Department) provides administers and distributes various state and federal grants to counties, cities, and other units of local government for local community development, workforce development, growth management planning, and infrastructure projects.

The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTB) provides planning, coordination, evaluation, monitoring, and policy analysis for the state training system and advises the Governor and Legislature on the statewide system.

The Skilled and Educated Workforce Report, published every two years, is the product of the Washington Student Achievement Council, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and the WTB. The 2015 Report projected a robust demand in Washington for workers with postsecondary education. Supply-demand gaps were found in production and trade fields, such as auto and diesel mechanics and machine tool technicians; business, management, and

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sales occupations; service occupations; health care occupations; science and technology fields; and in the culinary and hospitality industries.

### **Summary of Bill:**

Subject to amounts appropriated, a grant program called the Skilled Worker Outreach, Recruitment, and Career Awareness Training Program is created (grant program). The purpose of the grant program is to increase the state's skilled workforce by awarding matching grants to eligible applicants to:

- engage in outreach and recruiting efforts to increase enrollment in, and completion of, skilled worker awareness training programs and to determine current, future, and critical workforce needs; and
- provide skilled worker awareness training.

"Skilled worker awareness training program" means an accredited educational, occupational education, state-approved pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, or similar training program that:

- trains people to perform a skill that is needed in the workforce;
- awards an industry or state recognized certificate, credential, associate degree, professional license, or similar evidence of achievement; and
- does not include a program that awards bachelor degrees or higher degrees.

Eligible applicants are government or nongovernment entities or organizations that offer, or plan to offer, a skilled worker awareness training program and that have partnered with industry to offer or fund a skilled worker awareness training program.

The Department must establish a process for accepting applications and must administer the program. The Department must begin accepting applications by January 1, 2018, and by every January 1 thereafter. If the applicant meets all criteria, the Department must send the application to a grant review committee for consideration. Matching grants must be awarded no later than April 1 each year following the application submittal deadline.

To be considered for a matching grant, an applicant must include in the application, at a minimum:

- a description of how the matching grant will be used to recruit participants and provide an outreach plan for its existing or proposed skilled worker awareness training programs;
- a description of the skilled worker awareness training program it plans to offer, including the location of the program, the particular skills taught, and if an existing program, the number of years it has been in operation;
- past, current, and projected enrollment in the skilled worker awareness training program, and if an existing program, the estimated increase in enrollment;
- if an existing skilled worker awareness training program, a comparison of the number of participants who enroll in the program and the number of participants who complete the program over a five-year period, if available;
- specific industry needs or gaps in the workforce that the skilled worker awareness training program will address;
- a description of intended or existing partnerships with industry members;
- costs to operate the skilled worker awareness training program;

- resources the applicant will commit in matching dollars, and existing resources the applicant has invested in recruiting, outreach, and funding of its skilled worker awareness training program; and
- any other information the Department requires.

The Department must make recommendations to the grant review committee regarding who should receive a matching grant and the amount. The review committee must consist of 12 members, with representatives from the following:

- the Department of Labor and Industries;
- the Department of Employment Security;
- the Department of Enterprise Services;
- the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board;
- the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges;
- two representatives from business;
- two representatives from labor; and
- two representatives from the Washington Apprenticeship and Training Council.

The review committee must establish criteria for ranking applicants and must rank applicants based on which have the best potential to:

- Reach a broad and diverse audience through recruitment and outreach efforts;
- Significantly increase enrollment and completion of their skilled worker awareness training program;
- Fill existing need for skilled workers in the market; and
- Have demonstrated the following, prioritized in the following order:
  - either: (a) the applicant will provide monetary contributions from its own resources; or (b) the applicant has contributed its own resources in the form of monetary or in-kind matching contributions; and
  - either (a) the applicant has secured an industry partner; or (b) has secured from an industry partner a monetary or in-kind contribution, conditional job placement guarantees or articulation agreements, or that the industry partner has contributed other meaningful investment in skilled worker awareness training programs.

The review committee must submit its recommendations to the Director of the Department, who must determine to whom and in what amounts to award matching grants.

Grant recipients shall not use matching grants for tuition subsidies or to reduce tuition for a skilled worker awareness training program.

Recipients must submit a quarterly report and an annual report to the review committee on the measurable outcomes achieved.

By December 1, 2019, and by each December 1 thereafter, the review committee must submit an annual report to the Governor and the appropriate committees of the Legislature. The report must include, among other things, the number of individuals who obtained employment in positions that use skills for which participants received training.

The Department, in coordination with the WTB, must assess current and future workforce needs and coordinate skilled worker awareness training and education programs throughout the state.

The coordination must include, among other things, partnering with industry associations, labor/management programs, and businesses.

The skilled worker outreach, recruitment, and career awareness training program account is created in the custody of the State Treasurer. The Department must deposit in the account all money received for the program including private contributions. Expenditures from the account may only be used for matching grants. An appropriation is not required for expenditures.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.