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**ENGROSSED SENATE BILL 6296**

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**State of Washington**

**68th Legislature**

**2024 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Boehnke and Dozier

Read first time 01/23/24. Referred to Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development.

1       AN ACT Relating to establishing a retail industry work group;  
2       creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

3       BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4       NEW SECTION.   **Sec. 1.**   A 2023 report examining the future of the  
5       retail workforce in Washington state found that prioritizing ways to  
6       reduce turnover and increase internal promotion would offer benefits  
7       to both employers and workers simultaneously. To accomplish this, the  
8       report recommends the standardization of the credentials, degrees,  
9       and postsecondary awards that are of benefit to individuals in the  
10      retail industry as well as identifying credential pathways toward  
11      academic degrees and state-registered apprenticeship programs that  
12      would support a retail career path.

13      (1) The state board for community and technical colleges shall  
14      establish a retail work group consisting of higher education,  
15      business, labor, and workforce development representatives with  
16      expertise in the retail workforce. The work group shall identify and  
17      report to the legislature by October 1, 2025, the following:

18      (a) Degrees, certificates, state-registered apprenticeship  
19      programs, and education programs of value to the retail workforce;

20      (b) Gaps in educational opportunities and skill development in  
21      existing academic programs;

1           (c) Best practices in program design and curriculum for high  
2 quality credentials in support of the retail sector;  
3           (d) Career pathways for individuals in the retail sector with a  
4 focus on stackable credentials; and  
5           (e) Any barriers individuals face in attaining high quality  
6 credentials in support of a retail career.  
7           (2) The work group shall recommend up to four colleges for pilot  
8 programs for short-term credentials and microcredentials in support  
9 of the retail workforce. These pilot programs must be designed with  
10 the best practices from subsection (1) of this section.  
11           (3) "State-registered apprenticeship program" means an approved  
12 apprenticeship program under chapter 49.04 RCW that has been approved  
13 to participate in state financial aid programs.  
14           (4) This section expires July 1, 2026.

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