

**SENATE, No. 393**

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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**218th LEGISLATURE**

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PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2018 SESSION

**Sponsored by:**

**Senator FRED H. MADDEN, JR.**

**District 4 (Camden and Gloucester)**

**SYNOPSIS**

Establishes Talent Network Program in DOLWD.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 AN ACT establishing the Talent Network Program in the  
2 Department of Labor and Workforce Development and  
3 supplementing P.L.1992, c.43 (C.34:15D-1 et seq.).  
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5 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State  
6 of New Jersey:

7  
8 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

9 a. To maintain a competitive edge in the 21st century, New  
10 Jersey must develop a highly productive workforce that has the  
11 knowledge, skills, and abilities needed by employers in the State's  
12 key industries;

13 b. Workforce development and education programs that are  
14 directly aligned with the needs of employers will ensure that more  
15 New Jersey residents have pathways to economic opportunity and  
16 successful careers, and that employers receive the talent required to  
17 drive the growth of their businesses;

18 c. To cultivate such employer-driven partnerships, the  
19 Department of Labor and Workforce Development has supported  
20 the development of talent networks since 2012;

21 d. The department currently funds seven talent networks of  
22 employers, educational institutions, and workforce development  
23 organizations in industries including advanced manufacturing;  
24 financial services; health care; life sciences; technology and  
25 entrepreneurship; transportation, logistics, and distribution; and  
26 retail, hospitality, and tourism; and

27 e. The establishment of a Talent Network Program will create a  
28 permanent plan within the department to strengthen and enhance  
29 these and future partnerships in meeting the workforce needs of the  
30 State.

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32 2. a. There is established in the Department of Labor and  
33 Workforce Development the Talent Network Program. The purpose  
34 of this program is to develop centralized sources of intelligence  
35 about the workforce needs of the State's key industries by building  
36 employer-driven partnerships between employers, educational  
37 institutions, and other organizations concerned with workforce  
38 development.

39 b. To fulfill the goal of the Talent Network Program, the  
40 department shall annually award grant funds to consortia of  
41 employers, educational institutions, and other organizations  
42 concerned with workforce development, who demonstrate  
43 knowledge and expertise in one of the State's key industries. The  
44 department may continue grant agreements with talent networks which  
45 were awarded prior to the enactment of P.L. , c. (C. )  
46 (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

47 c. Each consortium awarded grant funds through the Talent  
48 Network Program pursuant to subsection b. of this section shall:

- 1 (1) engage and convene employers located throughout the State  
2 to identify common skill gaps and workforce needs within the  
3 targeted industry;
- 4 (2) engage and convene key education and workforce providers  
5 located throughout the State to identify the capacity of local  
6 partners to meet industry workforce needs;
- 7 (3) form partnerships that are employer-driven and that include  
8 at least three key education and workforce providers;
- 9 (4) create a strategy for building and sustaining such  
10 partnerships through commitments from employers, workforce  
11 organizations, educational institutions, training providers,  
12 community and faith-based organizations, and other key  
13 stakeholders;
- 14 (5) facilitate the development of a workforce plan to respond to  
15 identified workforce needs and opportunities;
- 16 (6) host an annual industry summit to gather intelligence and  
17 inform key workforce stakeholders of essential employer needs;
- 18 (7) contribute to the department's development of an industry-  
19 valued credential and degree list and career awareness materials;
- 20 (8) maintain a website and a presence on social media to  
21 disseminate industry intelligence and labor market information to  
22 job seekers, students, employers, and education and workforce  
23 stakeholders;
- 24 (9) report annually to the department and the Legislature the  
25 status of the industry's workforce needs; and
- 26 (10) perform any other duties as required by the Commissioner  
27 of Labor and Workforce Development.
- 28 d. Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the Talent Network  
29 Program shall be funded through State and federal job training funds,  
30 as defined in section 4 of P.L.1989, c.293 (C.34:15C-1).

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32 3. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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37 This bill establishes the Talent Network Program in the  
38 Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The purpose of  
39 this program is to develop centralized sources of intelligence about  
40 the workforce needs of the State's key industries by building  
41 employer-driven partnerships. To fulfill the purpose of the Talent  
42 Network Program, the department must annually award grant funds  
43 to consortia of employers, educational institutions, and other  
44 organizations concerned with workforce development, who  
45 demonstrate knowledge and expertise in one of the State's key  
46 industries.

47 Under the bill, each consortium awarded grant funds through the  
48 Talent Network Program is required to: engage and convene

1 employers to identify common skill gaps and workforce needs;  
2 engage and convene key education and workforce providers to  
3 identify the capacity of local partners to meet industry workforce  
4 needs; form partnerships that are employer-driven; create a strategy  
5 for building and sustaining such partnerships; facilitate the  
6 development of a workforce plan to respond to identified workforce  
7 needs and opportunities; host an annual industry summit;  
8 contribute to the department's development of an industry-valued  
9 credential and degree list and career awareness materials; maintain  
10 a website and a presence on social media to disseminate industry  
11 intelligence and labor market information; report annually to the  
12 department and the Legislature the status of the industry's  
13 workforce needs; and perform any other duties as required by the  
14 Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development.

15 This bill codifies the department's system of talent networks,  
16 partnerships of employers, workforce development organizations,  
17 educational institutions, training providers, community and faith-  
18 based organizations, and other key stakeholders designed to align  
19 workforce development and education programs with the needs of  
20 employers. The department has funded a variety of talent networks  
21 since 2012 through the dissemination of federal and State workforce  
22 training funds. The department currently funds seven talent  
23 networks: advanced manufacturing; financial services; health care;  
24 life sciences; technology and entrepreneurship; transportation,  
25 logistics, and distribution; and retail, hospitality, and tourism.  
26 Under the bill, the department is permitted to continue any grant  
27 agreements awarded prior to the enactment of this legislation.