

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 90

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 13, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman JOHN ARMATO

District 2 (Atlantic)

Assemblyman THOMAS P. GIBLIN

District 34 (Essex and Passaic)

Assemblyman WAYNE P. DEANGELO

District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblyman Mazzeo and Assemblywoman Murphy

SYNOPSIS

Urges President and Congress to enact “529 Opening Paths To Invest in Our Nation’s Students Act.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 4/9/2020)

1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** urging the President and the United States
2 Congress to enact the “529 Opening Paths To Invest in Our
3 Nation’s Students Act.”
4
5 **WHEREAS**, The registered apprenticeship system, administered by the
6 United States Department of Labor, is a unique training system that
7 combines technical education with structured on-the-job learning in
8 order to meet the needs of America’s skilled workforce; and
9 **WHEREAS**, Registered apprenticeship programs span a wide range of
10 industries and career pathways from traditional fields such as
11 construction and manufacturing to emerging industries in
12 healthcare, energy, and homeland security; and
13 **WHEREAS**, Apprenticeship programs provide invaluable benefits and
14 opportunities to students including, but not limited to, on-the-job
15 skills training, an assigned mentor, receipt of a nationally
16 recognized industry credential, incremental wage increases, and
17 excellent job placement rates; and
18 **WHEREAS**, Apprenticeship programs likewise benefit the state and
19 national economies by providing a skilled workforce in essential
20 trades and technical careers, often fields with high demand and
21 unmet workforce need; and
22 **WHEREAS**, Participation in an apprenticeship program can launch an
23 individual’s successful lifelong career, while helping to close the
24 skills gap and fulfill industry needs; and
25 **WHEREAS**, Nationwide, registered apprenticeship programs have
26 grown by 42 percent since 2013, and more than 190,000 individuals
27 entered the apprenticeship system in 2017; and
28 **WHEREAS**, In New Jersey alone, there are currently more than 7,000
29 individuals in active apprenticeships, and 94 new programs were
30 added in 2017; and
31 **WHEREAS**, Qualified tuition programs, known as 529 college savings
32 plans, are important tools for families that make college more
33 affordable by allowing the use of tax-free distributions for qualified
34 higher education expenses; however, 529 plans currently do not
35 benefit students who enroll in registered apprenticeship programs;
36 and
37 **WHEREAS**, On July 25, 2017, Congressmen Patrick Meehan and
38 Donald Norcross introduced H.R.3395, the “529 Opening Paths to
39 Invest in Our Nation’s Students Act” (“529 OPTIONS Act”), which
40 would enable students enrolled in registered apprenticeship
41 programs to utilize funds from a 529 college savings plan; and
42 **WHEREAS**, The 529 OPTIONS Act would amend the Internal Revenue
43 Code to allow tax-free distributions from 529 college savings plans
44 to be used for: (1) books, supplies, and equipment required for
45 enrollment in a registered apprenticeship program; (2) child care
46 costs in connection with such enrollment; and (3) costs associated
47 with obtaining an industry certification or other credential in
48 connection with an apprenticeship program; and

1 apprenticeship programs benefit the state and national economies by
2 providing a skilled workforce in a broad range of traditional and
3 emerging industries, often fields with high demand and unmet
4 workforce need. Passage of the 529 OPTIONS Act would benefit
5 the nation and the State of New Jersey by expanding the use of 529
6 college savings plans to support individuals who seek a skills-based
7 education and start their careers through an apprenticeship program.