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To promote economic growth and job creation in the United States by facilitating worker involvement in the development and implementation of advanced workplace technologies and advanced workplace practices and by identifying and disseminating information on best workplace practices.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 25 (legislative day, APRIL 19), 1993

Mr. WOFFORD (for himself, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. KERRY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources

A BILL

To promote economic growth and job creation in the United States by facilitating worker involvement in the development and implementation of advanced workplace technologies and advanced workplace practices and by identifying and disseminating information on best workplace practices.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Workers Technology
5 Skill Development Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds and declares the following:

3 (1) In an increasingly competitive world econ-
4 omy, the companies and nations which lead in the
5 rapid development, commercialization, and applica-
6 tion of new technologies, and in the competitively
7 priced, high-quality production of goods and serv-
8 ices, will lead in economic growth, employment, and
9 high living standards.

10 (2) While the United States remains the world
11 leader in science and invention, it has not done as
12 well as it should in rapidly making the transition
13 from the research laboratory to high-quality, com-
14 petitively priced production of goods and services.
15 This lag and the unprecedented competitive chal-
16 lenge that the Nation has faced from abroad have
17 contributed to a drop in real wages and living stand-
18 ards.

19 (3) Companies which are successfully competi-
20 tive in the rapid development, commercialization, ap-
21 plication and implementation of new technologies
22 recognize that worker participation and labor-man-
23 agement cooperation in the deployment, application
24 and implementation of new workplace technologies
25 make an important and significant contribution to
26 competitively-priced, high-quality production of

1 goods and services and in maintaining and improv-
2 ing real wages for workers.

3 (4) The Federal Government has an important
4 role in encouraging and augmenting private sector
5 activities relating to the development, application,
6 manufacture and deployment of new technologies.
7 That role should be to—

8 (A) support and cooperate with such ef-
9 forts;

10 (B) work with private companies, the
11 states, labor organizations and other worker or-
12 ganizations, and nonprofit institutions and in-
13 stitutions of higher education to ensure that the
14 development, application, production, and im-
15 plementation of new technologies is consistent
16 with the improvement of workers' skills, wages
17 and working conditions, and a healthy environ-
18 ment;

19 (C) encourage worker participation in the
20 development, commercialization, evaluation, se-
21 lection, application and implementation of new
22 technologies in the workplace; and

23 (D) promote the use and integration of
24 technologies in the workplace as a mechanism
25 to enhance workers' skills.

1 (5) In working with the private sector to pro-
2 mote the technological leadership and economic
3 growth of the United States, the Federal Govern-
4 ment has a responsibility to ensure that Federal
5 technology programs help make the United States
6 remain competitive while maintaining and improving
7 living standards and creating and retaining secure
8 domestic jobs in economically stable communities in
9 the United States.

10 **SEC. 3. PURPOSES.**

11 The purpose of this Act is to—

12 (1) improve the ability of workers, labor organi-
13 zations and worker organizations to recognize, de-
14 velop, assess, and improve strategies for successfully
15 integrating workers into the process of evaluating,
16 selecting and implementing new and advanced work-
17 place technologies, workplace practices and forms of
18 work organization; and

19 (2) develop resources within labor organiza-
20 tions, educational institutions and other nonprofit
21 organizations which will assist workers, labor organi-
22 zations and worker organizations in developing the
23 expertise necessary for effective participation with
24 employers in the development of strategies and pro-
25 grams for the successful evaluation, selection and

1 implementation of new and advanced workplace
2 technologies and advanced workplace practices and
3 forms of work organization through the provision of
4 a range of education, training and related services.

5 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

6 As used in this Act—

7 (1) the term “Department” means the Depart-
8 ment of Labor;

9 (2) the term “Secretary” means the Secretary
10 of Labor;

11 (3) the term “worker organization” means an
12 organization composed of nonsupervisory and
13 nonmanagerial workers whose representatives are
14 democratically selected by workers;

15 (4) the term “advanced workplace technologies”
16 including—

17 (A) equipment, systems and process de-
18 signed to enhance quality, productivity, flexibil-
19 ity, environmental quality, and energy efficiency
20 while enhancing worker skills and autonomy in
21 the workplace; and

22 (B) new technologies such as skill-based,
23 skill-enhancing computer-, network-, and
24 microprocessor-based production systems; work-
25 er-friendly software control and information

1 systems; worker-operated rapid communications
2 systems linking workplaces, customers and sup-
3 pliers; remote sensor and operations control
4 systems allowing operators to apply their knowl-
5 edge and judgment to complex production ac-
6 tivities;

7 (5) the term “advanced workplace practices”
8 means innovations in high-skill, high-performance
9 workplace systems that build on worker participation
10 in the evaluation, selection, development and imple-
11 mentation of new and advanced workplace tech-
12 nologies and forms of work organization, including
13 worker participation in cross-functional teams for
14 concurrent engineering of new products and produc-
15 tion systems; participative assessment and develop-
16 ment of strategies to enhance competitiveness and
17 advancements in technology, work organization job
18 design and skills; commitment to continuous learn-
19 ing and skill upgrading; multi-skilling; total quality
20 and continuous improvement programs based on a
21 partnership between workers and management; and
22 design of production systems that maximize energy
23 efficiency, environmental quality and recyclability
24 and parts reuse; and

1 (6) the term “advanced forms of work organiza-
2 tion” means way of organizing production activities,
3 job and workplace decisionmaking systems to take
4 full advantage of workers’ skills, knowledge and
5 judgment, including horizontal organization
6 hierarchies with expanded responsibility and auton-
7 omy for front-line workers; autonomous work teams
8 empowered to work directly with customers and sup-
9 pliers; jobs that are redesigned to expand skill and
10 capitalize on previous worker knowledge and experi-
11 ence; and work systems built in ongoing investments
12 in new and expanded worker skills.

13 **SEC. 5. GRANTS.**

14 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Labor, after
15 consultation with the Secretary of Commerce, shall, to the
16 extent appropriations are available, award grants to eligi-
17 ble entities to support the purpose of this Act as stated
18 in section 3.

19 (b) **ELIGIBILITY.**—To be eligible to receive a grant
20 under this section, an entity shall—

21 (1) be a post-secondary educational institution,
22 a labor organization, a worker organization, a non-
23 profit organization or a partnership consortium of
24 such entities;

1 (2) prepare and submit to the Secretary an ap-
2 plication at such time, in such manner and contain-
3 ing such information as the Secretary may require,
4 including a description of the activities that the en-
5 tity will carry out using amounts received under the
6 grant; and

7 (3) agree to make available (directly or through
8 donations from public or private entities) non-Fed-
9 eral contributions toward the costs of the activities
10 to be conducted with grant funds, in an amount
11 equal to the amount required under subsection (d)
12 of this section.

13 (c) USE OF AMOUNTS.—An entity shall use amounts
14 received under a grant awarded under this section to fur-
15 ther the purposes described in section 3 in the through
16 activities such as—

17 (1) the dissemination of information to employ-
18 ers, labor organizations, workers, worker organiza-
19 tions, State economic development agencies, State
20 industrial extension programs, Advanced Technology
21 Centers, and National Manufacturing Technology
22 Centers regarding successful practices relating to the
23 effective deployment of new and advanced workplace
24 technologies, advanced workplace practices and
25 forms of work organization;

1 (2) the provision of technical assistance to en-
2 able workers, labor organizations, worker organiza-
3 tions, employers, State economic development agen-
4 cies, State industrial extension programs, Advanced
5 Technology Centers, and National Manufacturing
6 Technology Centers to identify workplace practices,
7 forms of work organization and strategies which en-
8 hance the effective evaluation, selection and imple-
9 mentation of new workplace technologies;

10 (3) the provision of technical assistance to en-
11 able workers, labor organizations, worker organiza-
12 tions, employers, State economic development agen-
13 cies, State industrial extension programs, Advanced
14 Technology Centers, and National Manufacturing
15 Technology Centers to develop and implement coop-
16 erative labor-management programs which address
17 the evaluation, selection and implements implemen-
18 tation of new technologies in the workplace;

19 (4) the identification of new and advanced
20 workplace technologies, workplace practices and
21 forms of workplace organization which promote the
22 improvement of workers' skills, wages and working
23 conditions and are consistent to the needs of local
24 communities and a healthy environment;

1 (5) the development and dissemination of train-
2 ing programs and materials relating to the services
3 provided pursuant to paragraphs (1) through (4)
4 above;

5 (d) TERMS OF GRANTS AND NON-FEDERAL
6 SHARES.—

7 (1) TERMS.—Grants awarded under this section
8 shall be for a term not to exceed six years.

9 (2) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—Amounts required
10 to be contributed by an entity under subsection
11 (b)(3) shall equal—

12 (A) an amount equal to 15 percent of the
13 amount provided under the grant in the first
14 year for which the grant is awarded;

15 (B) an amount equal to 20 percent of the
16 amount provided under the grant in the second
17 year for which the grant is awarded;

18 (C) an amount equal to 33 percent of the
19 amount provided under the grant in the third
20 year for which the grant is awarded;

21 (D) an amount equal to 40 percent of the
22 amount provided under the grant in the fourth
23 year for which the grant is awarded; and

1 (E) an amount equal to 50 percent of the
2 amount provided under the grant in the fifth
3 and sixth years for which the grant is awarded.

4 (e) EVALUATION.—The Department shall develop
5 mechanisms for evaluating the effectiveness of the use of
6 a grant awarded under this section.

7 **SEC. 6. IDENTIFICATION AND DISSEMINATION OF BEST**
8 **PRACTICES.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—

10 (1) The Secretary, in cooperation and after con-
11 sultation with the Secretary of Commerce, shall as-
12 sist employers, employer associations, workers, labor
13 organizations and worker organizations in success-
14 fully adopting advanced workplace technologies, ad-
15 vanced workplace practices and advanced forms of
16 work organization by identifying, collecting and dis-
17 seminating information on best workplace practices
18 and workplace assessment tools, including—

19 (A) methods, techniques and successful
20 models of labor-management cooperation and
21 worker participation in the development, evalua-
22 tion, selection and implementation of new and
23 advanced workplace technologies, workplace
24 practices, and new forms of work organization;

1 (B) methods, techniques and successful
2 models for the design and implementation of
3 new and advanced workplace practices;

4 (C) methods, techniques and successful
5 models for the design and implementation of
6 new forms of work organization; and

7 (D) methods, techniques and successful
8 models for the assessment of worker skills and
9 training needs relating to the effective develop-
10 ment, evaluation, selection and implementation
11 of new and advanced workplace technologies,
12 workplace practices and forms of work organi-
13 zation.

14 (2) Such best practice information shall include
15 summaries and analyses of best practice cases, cri-
16 teria for assessment of current workplace practices;
17 and information on the best available education and
18 training materials and services relating to the devel-
19 opment, implementation and operation of systems
20 utilizing new and advanced workplace technologies,
21 workplace practices and forms of work organization.

22 (b) DISTRIBUTION.—The information and materials
23 developed under this subsection shall be distributed
24 through an appropriate entity designated by the Secretary
25 of Commerce to the Regional Centers for the Transfer of

1 Manufacturing Technology, to the Manufacturing Out-
2 reach Center, to other technology training entities, and di-
3 rectly to others.

4 **SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appro-
6 priated to carry out this Act such sums as may be nec-
7 essary for each of the fiscal years 1995 through 1997.

8 (b) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts appropriated under
9 paragraph (a) shall remain available until expended.

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