
Jumpstarting Our Businesses by Supporting Students (JOBS) Act Fact Sheet

On January 31, 2023, Senators Tim Kaine (D-VA) and Mike Braun (R-IN) reintroduced S. 161 Jumpstarting Our Businesses by Supporting Students (JOBS) Act. The bill has been referred to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. The House version of the bill, H.R. 793, is identical in language and was introduced by Rep. Bill Johnson (R-OH), Reps. Lisa Blunt-Rochester (D-DE), Michael Turner (R-OH), and Mikie Sherrill (D-NJ). It was referred to the House Committee on Education and the Workforce.

The legislation would allow students to use their federal Pell Grants for high-quality, shorter-term job training programs that are between 150-600 clock hours, and between 8-15 weeks, in length for the first time. As of now, students can only use Pell Grants for programs longer than 15 weeks and at least 600 clock hours. By expanding Pell Grant eligibility, the JOBS Act would remove financial barriers to postsecondary education to help close the skills gap and provide workers with the job training and credentials they need for careers in high-demand fields.

Below is a short summary of the changes proposed in the bill:

- To ensure students receiving federal Pell Grants are earning high-quality postsecondary credentials, programs eligible under this bill must meet strict requirements including:
 - Meet Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) standards (pg. 2 line 16)
 - Align with the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act’s program of study definition (pg. 2 line 21)
 - Align with the requirements of high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the State or local area (pg. 3 line 10)
 - Be recognized by employers, industry, or sector partnerships (pg. 3 line 21)
 - Not be exclusively online programs
- The bill defines ‘eligible job training programs’ as:
 - Between 150 to 600 clock hours of instructional time over 8 - 15 weeks (pg. 3 line 5)
 - Programs that provide career and technical education instruction at public institutions of higher education such as a community or technical colleges (pg. 6 line 16)
 - Confer students with licenses, certification, or credentials that meet hiring requirements of employers in the field for which the job training is offered (pg. 10 line 21)
 - Include training that meets the needs of local or regional workforce and industry partnerships (page 11 line 14)
 - Provide institutional credit articulation so students can continue to pursue further education in their careers (pg. 12 line 12)
- All programs must be evaluated by an accrediting agency and approved by the state workforce board in addition to the U.S. Department of Education (pg. 5 line 16)
- The bill also creates an inter-agency data sharing agreement between the Department of Labor and Department of Education to ensure access to performance accountability measures data within WIOA, such as median earnings and completion (pg. 18 line 12)