

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 687

To amend the Trade Act of 1974 to authorize a State to reimburse certain costs incurred by the State in providing training to workers after a petition for certification of eligibility for trade adjustment assistance has been filed, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 21, 2017

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. FRANKEN, and Mr. CASEY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance

A BILL

To amend the Trade Act of 1974 to authorize a State to reimburse certain costs incurred by the State in providing training to workers after a petition for certification of eligibility for trade adjustment assistance has been filed, and for other purposes.

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 “Workforce Training
5 Enhancement Act of 2017”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

1 (1) The viability of the domestic steel industry
2 is crucial to the United States economy and national
3 security.

4 (2) The steel and taconite iron mining indus-
5 tries have been severely impacted by the foreign
6 dumping and overproduction of steel and are contin-
7 ually faced with unfair trade practices.

8 (3) In 2014, United States imports of steel and
9 steel products increased by 36 percent and captured
10 28 percent of the total United States steel market.
11 In 2015, United States imports of steel and steel
12 products continued to increase, and captured 29 per-
13 cent of the total United States steel market.

14 (4) In 1974, Congress enacted the Trade Act of
15 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2101 et seq.), which established the
16 trade adjustment assistance for workers program
17 under chapter 2 of title II of that Act (19 U.S.C.
18 2271 et seq.) to assist workers who have been ad-
19 versely affected by trade.

20 (5) The trade adjustment assistance for work-
21 ers program provides vital benefits and services to
22 workers whose employment has been adversely af-
23 fected by foreign trade. Those benefits and services
24 include education and training, income support, relo-

1 cation assistance, job search assistance, and the
2 health coverage tax credit.

3 (6) Since the inception of the trade adjustment
4 assistance for workers program, more than
5 5,000,000 United States workers have been certified
6 as eligible for benefits and services under the pro-
7 gram.

8 (7) As of September 30, 2015, the trade adjust-
9 ment assistance for workers program had served
10 more than 2,200,000 workers.

11 (8) In fiscal year 2015, the Department of
12 Labor certified 413 petitions for eligibility for the
13 trade adjustment assistance for workers program,
14 which provided access to trade adjustment assistance
15 benefits for 57,631 workers.

16 (9) In 2015, more than 13,000 new partici-
17 pants were enrolled in the trade adjustment assist-
18 ance for workers program and the program provided
19 services and benefits to more than 47,000 workers.

20 (10) From fiscal year 2012 through fiscal year
21 2015, the average processing time for a petition
22 under the trade adjustment assistance for workers
23 program was 49.1 days and the average processing
24 time for fiscal year 2015 was 47.2 days.

1 (11) The trade adjustment assistance for work-
 2 ers program provides vital educational and training
 3 services to help trade-affected workers to acquire
 4 new skills and prepare for new employment.

5 (12) In order to empower workers who have
 6 been adversely affected by foreign trade, States
 7 should have the option of providing the funding for
 8 vital educational and training programs for workers
 9 while their petitions for certifications of eligibility
 10 for trade adjustment assistance are pending.

11 **SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF STATES TO REIMBURSE CER-**
 12 **TAIN COSTS OF PROVIDING TRAINING TO**
 13 **WORKERS AFTER A PETITION FOR TRADE AD-**
 14 **JUSTMENT ASSISTANCE IS FILED.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 236(a)(6) of the Trade
 16 Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2296(a)(6)) is amended by adding
 17 at the end the following:

18 “(C)(i) If the conditions described in clause (ii) are
 19 met, a State may use the funds distributed to the State
 20 under paragraph (2) to reimburse the costs of providing
 21 training to a worker before the worker is approved for
 22 training under paragraph (1) paid by—

23 “(I) the State from funds provided by the
 24 State;

1 “(II) the State or local workforce development
2 areas within the State from funds available under
3 subtitle B of title I of the Workforce Innovation and
4 Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3151 et seq.); or

5 “(III) an eligible entity under section 170 of
6 that Act (29 U.S.C. 3225) in the State from funds
7 available under that section.

8 “(ii) The conditions described in this clause are met
9 if—

10 “(I) as of the date of the reimbursement under
11 clause (i) the worker is covered by a certification for
12 eligibility under subchapter A; and

13 “(II) the training the costs of which are being
14 reimbursed—

15 “(aa) commenced after the date on which
16 the total or partial separations of the group of
17 workers covered by the certification for eligi-
18 bility began or threatened to begin; and

19 “(bb) meets the requirements for approval
20 of training under paragraph (1).”.

21 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section
22 236(a)(4)(B) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C.
23 2296(a)(4)(B)) is amended by striking “No” and inserting
24 “Except as provided in paragraph (6)(C), no”.

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