

AMENDMENT NO. \_\_\_\_\_ Calendar No. \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose: In the nature of a substitute.

**IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES—118th Cong., 1st Sess.**

**S. 2402**

To amend the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act  
to establish a career pathways grant program.

Referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_ and  
ordered to be printed

Ordered to lie on the table and to be printed

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE intended  
to be proposed by \_\_\_\_\_

Viz:

1 Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the fol-  
2 lowing:

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Gateway to Careers  
5 Act of 2023”.

6 **SEC. 2. CAREER PATHWAYS GRANT PROGRAM.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle D of title I of the Work-  
8 force Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3221 et  
9 seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

10 **“SEC. 173. CAREER PATHWAYS GRANT PROGRAM.**

11 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:



1 workforce (including through a community  
2 rehabilitation program (as defined in sec-  
3 tion 7 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973  
4 (29 U.S.C. 705))), such as a State com-  
5 prehensive rehabilitation center.

6 “(C) EDUCATION PARTNER.—An education  
7 partner described in subparagraph (A) means  
8 one or more of the following:

9 “(i) An institution of higher edu-  
10 cation, as defined in section 101 of the  
11 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.  
12 1001), or a postsecondary vocational insti-  
13 tution, as defined in section 102(e) of such  
14 Act (20 U.S.C. 1002(e)).

15 “(ii) An area career and technical  
16 education school that provides education at  
17 the postsecondary level.

18 “(iii) A local educational agency, as  
19 defined under section 8101 of the Elemen-  
20 tary and Secondary Education Act of 1965  
21 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

22 “(iv) An eligible provider, as defined  
23 under section 203.

24 “(D) EMPLOYER PARTNER.—An employer  
25 partner described in subparagraph (A) means a

1 representative of multiple businesses or other  
2 employers in the career pathways field, includ-  
3 ing small and medium-sized employers.

4 “(2) ELIGIBLE INDUSTRY OR SECTOR PART-  
5 NERSHIP.—The term ‘eligible industry or sector  
6 partnership’ means—

7 “(A) an industry or sector partnership,  
8 which shall, at a minimum, include multiple  
9 representatives described in each of clauses (i)  
10 through (iii) of paragraph (26)(A) of section 3;  
11 or

12 “(B) a partnership, of multiple entities de-  
13 scribed in section 3(26) and a State board or  
14 local board, that is in the process of estab-  
15 lishing an industry or sector partnership.

16 “(3) MEASURABLE SKILL GAINS.—The term  
17 ‘measurable skill gains’ has the meaning given the  
18 term in section 361.155(a)(1)(v) of title 34, Code of  
19 Federal Regulations (or successor regulations).

20 “(4) SECRETARY.—The term ‘Secretary’ means  
21 the Secretary of Labor.

22 “(5) UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING.—The  
23 term ‘universal design for learning’ has the meaning  
24 given the term in section 103 of the Higher Edu-  
25 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1003).

1 “(b) PROGRAM ESTABLISHED.—

2 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consulta-  
3 tion with the Secretary of Education, shall establish  
4 a career pathway grant program, through which the  
5 Secretary shall award grants, on a competitive basis,  
6 to State workforce agencies to enable the State  
7 workforce agencies to award subgrants to career  
8 pathway partnership applicants to carry out the ac-  
9 tivities described in subsection (e).

10 “(2) GRANT AWARDS TO CAREER PATHWAY  
11 PARTNERSHIP APPLICANTS.—In the case of a State  
12 in which the State workforce agency does not apply  
13 for a grant under this section, the Secretary may  
14 award a grant to a career pathway partnership ap-  
15 plicant to carry out the activities described in sub-  
16 section (e) in such State.

17 “(c) APPLICATION FOR GRANTS.—A State workforce  
18 agency that desires to receive a grant under this section  
19 shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time  
20 and in such manner as the Secretary may require.

21 “(d) GEOGRAPHIC EQUITY.—In awarding grants  
22 under this section, the Secretary shall ensure an equitable  
23 geographic distribution of such grants, including to rural  
24 areas and other regions that have traditionally been un-

1 derserved by regional economic development and industry  
2 or sector partnership activities.

3 “(e) SUBGRANTS TO CAREER PATHWAY PARTNER-  
4 SHIP APPLICANTS AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—

5 “(1) IN GENERAL.—A State workforce agency  
6 that receives a grant under this section shall use the  
7 grant funds—

8 “(A) to award subgrants to career pathway  
9 partnership applicants; and

10 “(B) to provide technical assistance in ap-  
11 plying for subgrants under this section to eligi-  
12 ble career pathway partnership applicants.

13 “(2) APPLICATIONS.—A career pathway part-  
14 nership applicant desiring to receive a subgrant  
15 under this section shall submit an application to the  
16 State workforce agency, at such time and in such  
17 manner as the State workforce agency may require.  
18 Such application shall include the following informa-  
19 tion:

20 “(A) A description of the career pathway  
21 program that will be supported under the  
22 subgrant, including a description of the in-de-  
23 mand industry sectors or occupations that will  
24 be targeted and the industry-recognized creden-

1           tials or other recognized postsecondary creden-  
2           tials to be awarded.

3           “(B) A description of how the career path-  
4           way program supported under the subgrant is  
5           aligned and coordinated with other employment,  
6           education, and support services offered in the  
7           geographic area served under the subgrant, in-  
8           cluding those provided under this Act, the  
9           Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001  
10          et seq.), the Carl D. Perkins Career and Tech-  
11          nical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301  
12          et seq.), the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29  
13          U.S.C. 701 et seq.), the supplemental nutrition  
14          assistance program established under the Food  
15          and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et  
16          seq.), and the program of block grants to States  
17          for temporary assistance for needy families  
18          under part A of title IV of the Social Security  
19          Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.).

20          “(C) A description of the populations that  
21          will be served under the subgrant, including an  
22          analysis of any barriers to employment, such as  
23          supportive services, including in postsecondary  
24          education, access, and completion, that such  
25          populations face, and an analysis of how the

1 services to be provided under the subgrant will  
2 address those barriers.

3 “(D) A description of the activities and  
4 services to be provided under this subgrant,  
5 consistent with paragraph (4).

6 “(E) A description of the performance out-  
7 comes that the career pathway partnership ap-  
8 plicant plans to achieve, including a description  
9 of how the career pathway partnership appli-  
10 cant will evaluate and measure student progress  
11 and measurable skill gains along a career path-  
12 way.

13 “(F) Such other information as the State  
14 workforce agency may require.

15 “(3) PRIORITY.—In awarding subgrants under  
16 this subsection, the State workforce agency shall—

17 “(A) give priority to career pathway part-  
18 nership applicants that include as a partner in  
19 the partnership a public institution of higher  
20 education at which the highest degree that is  
21 predominantly awarded to students is an associ-  
22 ate’s degree, including 2-year Tribal Colleges or  
23 Universities under section 316 of the Higher  
24 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1059e) and



1 public 2-year State institutions of higher edu-  
2 cation;

3 “(B) give priority to career pathway part-  
4 nership applicants that seek to serve individuals  
5 with a barrier to employment or individuals  
6 with a barrier to postsecondary education; and

7 “(C) give priority to career pathway part-  
8 nership applicants that will use subgrant funds  
9 for an activity, strategy, or intervention that—

10 “(i) demonstrates, using evidence-  
11 based data, improving student outcomes or  
12 other relevant outcomes based on—

13 “(I) strong evidence from not  
14 less than 1 well-designed and well-im-  
15 plemented experimental study;

16 “(II) moderate evidence from not  
17 less than 1 well-designed and well-im-  
18 plemented quasi-experimental study;

19 or

20 “(III) promising evidence from  
21 not less than 1 well-designed and well-  
22 implemented correlational study with  
23 statistical controls for selection bias;

24 “(ii) demonstrates a rationale based  
25 on high quality research finding or positive

1 evaluation that such activity, strategy, or  
2 intervention is likely to improve student  
3 outcomes or other relevant outcomes; and

4 “(iii) includes ongoing efforts to ex-  
5 amine the effects of such activity, strategy,  
6 or intervention.

7 “(4) USE OF FUNDS.—

8 “(A) DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING  
9 CAREER PATHWAY PROGRAMS.—A career path-  
10 way partnership applicant that receives a  
11 subgrant under this subsection shall use the  
12 subgrant funds to carry out activities that sup-  
13 port the development and implementation of a  
14 career pathway program, which shall include  
15 one or more of the following:

16 “(i) The planning and implementation  
17 of agreements between the partners of the  
18 career pathway partnership applicant to  
19 support seamless transitions between ele-  
20 ments of the career pathway program of-  
21 fered by different partners, as appropriate.

22 “(ii) The development and expansion  
23 of new or existing programs at the career  
24 pathway partnership applicant that utilize  
25 integrated education and training strate-





1 and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011  
2 et seq.), the special supplemental nutrition  
3 program for women, infants, and children  
4 established by section 17 of the Child Nu-  
5 trition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786),  
6 housing, and other benefits, as appro-  
7 priate;

8 “(ii) offering career pathway naviga-  
9 tion and case management services, includ-  
10 ing providing information and outreach to  
11 target populations to encourage individuals  
12 to take part in programs and service offer-  
13 ings; and

14 “(iii) the provision of emergency  
15 grants to help students facing financial  
16 hardships that may impact enrollment or  
17 completion of an element of a career path-  
18 way program.

19 “(5) REPORTS.—

20 “(A) REPORT TO THE SECRETARY.—Each  
21 State workforce agency receiving a grant under  
22 this section shall submit a report to the Sec-  
23 retary, on an annual basis, describing—

24 “(i) the activities provided under the  
25 subgrants awarded under this section, in-

1 including activities carried out directly by ca-  
2 reer pathway partnership applicants;

3 “(ii) the students receiving services  
4 under the subgrants, disaggregated by age,  
5 race or ethnicity, gender, barriers to em-  
6 ployment, and income;

7 “(iii) the quality of jobs in which stu-  
8 dents receiving services through a career  
9 pathway program carried out through sub-  
10 grants under this section are employed  
11 after exit from the program; and

12 “(iv) indicators of performance for  
13 students receiving services through a ca-  
14 reer pathway program carried out through  
15 subgrants under this section, disaggregated  
16 by participant type as described in clause  
17 (ii), including, at a minimum—

18 “(I) the percentage of program  
19 participants who are in unsubsidized  
20 employment prior to enrollment in the  
21 career pathway program;

22 “(II) the percentage of program  
23 participants who are in unsubsidized  
24 employment during the second quarter  
25 after exit from the program;

1                   “(III) the percentage of program  
2 participants who are in unsubsidized  
3 employment during the fourth quarter  
4 after exit from the program;

5                   “(IV) the median earnings of  
6 program participants who are in un-  
7 subsidized employment prior to enroll-  
8 ment in the career pathway program;

9                   “(V) the median earnings of pro-  
10 gram participants who are in unsub-  
11 sidized employment during the second  
12 quarter after exit from the program;

13                   “(VI) the percentage of program  
14 participants who obtain a recognized  
15 postsecondary credential, or a sec-  
16 ondary school diploma or its recog-  
17 nized equivalent, during participation  
18 in or within 1 year after exit from the  
19 program;

20                   “(VII) the percentage of program  
21 participants who, during a program  
22 year, are in an education or training  
23 program that leads to a recognized  
24 postsecondary credential or employ-  
25 ment and who are achieving measur-

1                   able skill gains toward such a creden-  
2                   tial or employment; and

3                   “(VIII) the percentage of pro-  
4                   gram participants receiving support  
5                   services, disaggregated by type of  
6                   service.

7                   “(B) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Sec-  
8                   retary shall submit a report to Congress, on a  
9                   biennial basis, on the information submitted to  
10                  the Secretary under subparagraph (A).

11                  “(f) DURATION OF AWARDS.—Each grant and  
12                  subgrant awarded under this section shall be for a period  
13                  of not more than 4 years. A career pathway partnership  
14                  applicant may apply for subsequent subgrants after the  
15                  completion of a subgrant period.

16                  “(g) EVALUATION AND ADMINISTRATION.—The Sec-  
17                  retary shall reserve—

18                         “(1) not less than 1 percent and not more than  
19                         3 percent of the funds made available under sub-  
20                         section (h) for each fiscal year to—

21                                 “(A) conduct a rigorous, independent eval-  
22                                 uation of the activities funded under this sec-  
23                                 tion; and

24                                 “(B) disseminate and promote the utiliza-  
25                                 tion of evidence-based practices related to ca-



1 reer pathway programs for postsecondary stu-  
2 dents; and

3 “(2) not more than 3 percent of the funds  
4 made available under subsection (h) for each fiscal  
5 year for administrative costs associated in carrying  
6 out this section.

7 “(h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
8 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out the activi-  
9 ties described in this section, such sums as may be nec-  
10 essary for fiscal year 2024 and for each subsequent fiscal  
11 year thereafter.”.

12 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents in  
13 section 1(b) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity  
14 Act is amended by inserting after the item relating to sec-  
15 tion 172, the following:

“Sec. 173. Career pathways grant program.”.