



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 171

January Session, 2025

Substitute Senate Bill No. 1260

Senate, March 20, 2025

The Committee on Higher Education and Employment Advancement reported through SEN. SLAP of the 5th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT EXPANDING MANUFACTURING WORKFORCE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 4-124mm of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

3 (a) There is established an account known as the Connecticut Career
4 Accelerator Program Account that is within the Office of Workforce
5 Strategy for the purpose of supporting commercial driver's license
6 training and training for careers identified by the Office of Workforce
7 Strategy, pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of this section,
8 within the CareerConneCT workforce training program. The account
9 shall contain any moneys required by law to be deposited therein and
10 such moneys shall be held in such account. The account may accept
11 gifts, grants or donations from public or private sources. Any balance
12 remaining in the account at the end of any fiscal year shall be carried
13 forward in the account for the fiscal year next succeeding. The account

14 may be used for the purposes of the program described in subsection (b)
15 of this section.

16 (b) (1) Not later than July 1, 2024, the Office of Workforce Strategy
17 shall design a program to support individuals pursuing training to
18 obtain a commercial driver's license, including through the use of
19 income share agreements or equivalent financial instruments. The
20 Office of Workforce Strategy may competitively procure a consultant to
21 support the design and implementation of the program. The program
22 shall be implemented not later than January 1, 2025.

23 (2) Not later than July 1, 2025, the Office of Workforce Strategy shall
24 identify (A) additional training opportunities, for careers requiring not
25 more than one year of training, to expand the program designed
26 pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, and (B) training providers
27 to use for such additional training opportunities.

28 (c) The design of the program under subsection (b) of this section
29 shall take into consideration: (1) Developing metrics for identifying
30 qualified training providers, (2) developing incentive-based payments
31 for training providers, such as paying a trainer eighty per cent of a
32 student's tuition prior to providing any training and paying the trainer
33 the remaining tuition upon placement of the student in a job, [and] (3)
34 developing a method for targeting potential students for the program,
35 and (4) prioritizing the inclusion of women in training opportunities
36 related to manufacturing, including, but not limited to, women who
37 apply to a youth manufacturing training program in the state or a
38 CareerConneCT workforce training program related to manufacturing,
39 whether or not such women participated in such programs. The Office
40 of Workforce Strategy shall notify each woman who participates or
41 applies to participate in the program about the availability of career and
42 financial counseling services through Connecticut State Community
43 College, pursuant to section 3 of this act. The program shall include
44 terms and conditions for the payment obligations undertaken by
45 individuals who obtain tuition assistance from the account. The
46 program shall require an individual who receives a direct tuition

47 payment from the account to repay such payment if such individual is
48 placed in a job after receiving training through the program that
49 provides the individual with a higher income than such individual
50 received prior to participating in such training. No interest shall be
51 charged on any tuition repayment obligation. The program shall also
52 consider offering wrap-around supports, such as stipends, child care
53 services, counseling and other supports identified by the Office of
54 Workforce Strategy. An individual who receives such supports shall not
55 be required to repay the account for such supports.

56 (d) The Office of Workforce Strategy shall develop a marketing plan
57 to attract individuals who fit the eligibility criteria for participation in
58 the program, specifically targeted at recruiting individuals who are
59 underserved, disadvantaged, unemployed, underemployed, dislocated
60 workers, receiving temporary assistance for needy families,
61 supplemental nutrition assistance program or any other public
62 assistance benefits, formerly incarcerated or veterans of the armed
63 services. The marketing plan shall include outreach to (1) various state
64 agencies, the regional workforce investment boards, transit authorities,
65 housing authorities, the Office of Early Childhood and other partners as
66 identified by the Office of Workforce Strategy, and (2) women who meet
67 one or more of the qualities of individuals specifically targeted for
68 recruitment.

69 (e) (1) Not later than July 1, 2025, the Office of Workforce Strategy
70 shall submit a report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a,
71 on the design and implementation of the commercial driver's license
72 training program established under this section to the joint standing
73 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
74 relating to appropriations and the budgets of state agencies, commerce,
75 education, finance, revenue and bonding, higher education and
76 employment advancement and labor and public employees.

77 (2) Not later than July 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, the Office of
78 Workforce Strategy shall submit a report, in accordance with the
79 provisions of section 11-4a, regarding the identification of additional

80 training opportunities and training providers pursuant to subdivision
81 (2) of subsection (b) of this section to the joint standing committees of
82 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to
83 appropriations and the budgets of state agencies, commerce, education,
84 finance, revenue and bonding, higher education and employment
85 advancement, and labor and public employees. Such report shall
86 include, but need not be limited to, information on the (A) additional
87 training opportunities identified by the Office of Workforce Strategy, (B)
88 number and percentage of individuals participating in such
89 opportunities who are women, by type of training program, and (C)
90 such other demographic information on the individuals who participate
91 in such opportunities as deemed pertinent by the office.

92 (f) Not later than July 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, the Office of
93 Workforce Strategy shall submit a report, in accordance with the
94 provisions of section 11-4a, on the commercial driver's license training
95 program established under this section to the Governor and to the joint
96 standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of
97 matters relating to appropriations and the budgets of state agencies,
98 commerce, education, finance, revenue and bonding, higher education
99 and employment advancement and labor and public employees. Such
100 report may include information on the (1) program completion and job
101 placement rate of individuals participating in the program; (2) starting
102 wages, wage gains and wage growth of individuals employed after
103 participating in the program; (3) funds used as payment obligations,
104 grants and wraparound services for individuals participating in the
105 program; (4) percentage of program participants in compliance with
106 repayment obligations; and (5) total repayments received.

107 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) (a) Each regional workforce
108 investment board that operates a youth manufacturing training
109 program shall specifically market such program to recruit female
110 students enrolled in a high school in grade eleven or twelve within such
111 board's region. Each board shall notify any female student who
112 participates or applies to participate in such youth manufacturing
113 training program about the availability of (1) manufacturing training

114 programs through the CareerConneCT workforce training program, (2)
115 interest-free loans through the Connecticut Career Accelerator Program
116 established pursuant to section 4-124mm of the general statutes, as
117 amended by this act, and (3) career and financial counseling services
118 through Connecticut State Community College pursuant to section 3 of
119 this act.

120 (b) The Office of Workforce Strategy shall (1) specifically market each
121 CareerConneCT workforce training program related to manufacturing
122 to recruit women who are (A) underserved, (B) disadvantaged, (C)
123 unemployed, (D) underemployed, (E) dislocated workers, (F) receiving
124 temporary assistance for needy families, supplemental nutrition
125 assistance program or any other public assistance benefits, (G) formerly
126 incarcerated, or (H) veterans of the armed services, and (2) prioritize the
127 participation of such women in such workforce training program. The
128 office shall notify each woman who participates or applies to participate
129 in the CareerConneCT workforce training program about the
130 availability of (A) interest-free loans through the Connecticut Career
131 Accelerator Program established pursuant to section 4-124mm of the
132 general statutes, as amended by this act, and (B) career and financial
133 counseling services through Connecticut State Community College
134 pursuant to section 3 of this act.

135 (c) Not later than January 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, the Office
136 of Workforce Strategy and each regional workforce investment board
137 shall report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the
138 general statutes, to the joint standing committee of the General
139 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to higher education
140 and employment advancement on the demographic information of the
141 individuals who participate in any manufacturing training program
142 operated by said office and each board, respectively.

143 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) The Connecticut State
144 Community College, in consultation with each regional workforce
145 investment board and the Office of Workforce Strategy, shall offer
146 career and financial counseling services to each woman who applies to

147 participate in a youth manufacturing training program, a
 148 CareerConneCT workforce training program related to manufacturing
 149 or the Connecticut Career Accelerator Program established pursuant to
 150 section 4-124mm of the general statutes, as amended by this act, whether
 151 or not such woman participated in such programs. Such counseling
 152 services shall include, but need not be limited to, the financial aid and
 153 certificate and degree programs applicable to such woman's academic
 154 and career goals.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	July 1, 2025	4-124mm
Sec. 2	July 1, 2025	New section
Sec. 3	July 1, 2025	New section

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Section 1(c), "notify any woman" was changed to "notify each woman", in Section 2(b)(1), subparagraph designators (A) to (H), inclusive, were added, in Section 2(b)(2), "notify any woman" was changed to "notify each woman", and in Section 3, "career and financial counseling services" and "or not" were moved earlier in the sentence, for clarity.

HED *Joint Favorable Subst. -LCO*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 26 \$	FY 27 \$
Treasurer, Debt Serv.	GF - Potential Cost	See Below	See Below

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill is anticipated to increase marketing costs to the Career Accelerator program, which is supported by General Obligation (GO) bond funds, by requiring the program to prioritize eligible women and to include outreach to such candidates in the program's marketing plan.

Future General Fund debt service costs may be incurred sooner under the bill to the degree that it causes authorized GO bond funds to be expended more rapidly than they otherwise would have been.

As of March 1, 2025, there is \$5 million in unallocated bond balance available for the Career Accelerator program under the Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS). OWS intends to use \$300,000 of these funds to establish the Career Accelerator program as required under current law.

The bill does not change GO bond authorizations relevant to the program.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

OLR Bill Analysis**SB 1260*****AN ACT EXPANDING MANUFACTURING WORKFORCE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN.*****SUMMARY**

This bill makes various changes designed to expand opportunities for women in the manufacturing workforce. These changes include requiring (1) the Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS) to prioritize the inclusion of, and outreach to, women in their Career Accelerator Program; (2) regional workforce investment boards that operate a youth manufacturing training program to market to female high school students; and (3) the Connecticut State Community College (CT State) to offer career and financial counseling services to all women who apply to participate in a manufacturing training program.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

OWS PROGRAM OPPORTUNITY EXPANSION FOR WOMEN

The bill expands upon the OWS's Career Accelerator Program which supports, among others, individuals pursuing training opportunities for careers that require no more than one year of training.

The bill requires the program's design to consider prioritizing the inclusion of women in manufacturing-related training opportunities. This includes women who apply to a youth manufacturing training program or CareerConneCT manufacturing workforce training program (regardless of whether they participated).

The bill requires OWS to:

1. notify any woman who participates or applies to participate in the program about the availability of career and financial counseling services through CT State (see below), and

2. include outreach to qualified women in the program's marketing plan.

Existing law requires OWS, by July 1, 2026, to report to several legislative committees on identifying additional training opportunities and training providers for the program. The bill requires OWS to report annually and adds to the required contents information on the (1) number of women participating in each type of training program, percentage of participants who are women, and other demographic details and (2) additional training opportunities identified.

REGIONAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARDS AND OWS MARKETING TO WOMEN

The bill requires each regional workforce investment board that operates a youth manufacturing training program to specifically market the program to female 11th and 12th grade students. It also requires OWS to (1) specifically market each CareerConneCT manufacturing workforce training program to several categories of women, such as those who are underserved or disadvantaged, unemployed, formerly incarcerated, veterans, or on certain public assistance programs and (2) prioritize their participation.

The bill requires regional workforce investment boards to notify these students, once they apply or choose to participate, about the CareerConneCT workforce training program, interest-free loans through the Career Accelerator Program, and career and financial counseling services. Similarly, it requires OWS to notify these women, once they apply or choose to participate, about these loans and counseling services.

Under the bill, these boards, as well as OWS, must each submit a report with the demographic information of those participating in their manufacturing training programs to the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee by January 1, 2026, and annually thereafter.

**CAREER AND FINANCIAL COUNSELING SERVICES TO WOMEN
AT CT STATE**

The bill requires CT State, in consultation with OWS and each regional workforce investment board, to offer career and financial counseling services to all women who apply to participate in a youth manufacturing training program, a CareerConneCT workforce training program related to manufacturing, or the Connecticut Career Accelerator Program. The counseling services must address financial aid and certificate and degree program guidance.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 15 Nay 3 (02/27/2025)