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Date: (Filing No. H- )

**LABOR, COMMERCE, RESEARCH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

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**STATE OF MAINE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
127TH LEGISLATURE  
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT “ ” to H.P. 932, L.D. 1373, Bill, “An Act To Create the Put ME To Work Program”

Amend the bill by striking out everything after the enacting clause and before the summary and inserting the following:

**'Sec. 1. 26 MRSA c. 25, sub-c. 6** is enacted to read:

**SUBCHAPTER 6**

**PUT ME TO WORK PROGRAM**

**§2041. Put ME to Work Program**

**1. Establishment; purpose.** The Put ME to Work Program, referred to in this section as "the program," is established within the Department of Labor, Bureau of Employment Services, referred to in this section as "the bureau," and the State Workforce Investment Board. The program must facilitate the establishment of job training programs in this State by working with private employers, adult education providers and postsecondary education institutions. The job training programs in the program must provide training to prepare workers for jobs in high-demand fields.

**2. Training criteria for fewer than 5 workers for a single employer or 2 employers.** The bureau shall work with private employers and industry sector partners to determine the demand for jobs and the skills needed for those jobs and with adult education, training providers and postsecondary education institutions to provide the appropriate education and training. A single employer applicant or 2 employers training fewer than 5 persons are eligible to use the program if the training program meets the following criteria:

**A. Training is for prospective, new hire or incumbent workers. Prospective worker trainees must be guaranteed a job interview with at least one of the participating**

**COMMITTEE AMENDMENT**

1 employers upon meeting the pretraining qualifications and the successful completion  
2 of training;

3 B. The employer or employers work with career centers within the bureau to select,  
4 hire and train individuals from a pool of qualified candidates for employment as full-  
5 time regular employees at the end of training;

6 C. The job training program must provide education or training for employment in a  
7 trade or industry with a significant demand for skilled labor, either statewide or in a  
8 region in this State, that has been identified by the Center for Workforce Research  
9 and Information within the Department of Labor as providing employment for high-  
10 compensation jobs or in an industry in which technology or work practices have  
11 significantly changed to require training to assist new workers to acquire needed  
12 skills or incumbent workers to remain current and competitive;

13 D. The participating employers agree to hire persons who successfully complete the  
14 job training program at a post-training wage of at least \$2.50 per hour more than the  
15 minimum hourly wage rate as set in state law and to provide successful incumbent  
16 worker trainees with an increase in the hourly wage to meet or exceed the median  
17 wage for that occupation in this State as identified by the Center for Workforce  
18 Research and Information within the Department of Labor; and

19 E. A person who successfully completes the job training program must be awarded a  
20 certificate, degree or similar credential that is universally recognized by the  
21 employer’s trade association or industry.

22 The bureau shall leverage existing workforce funds and training programs and providers  
23 to assist employers in providing training. Priority for funding must be given to employers  
24 that contribute at least a 50% or higher in-kind or direct training cost match.

25 **3. Industry partnership criteria.** The bureau shall work with an industry  
26 partnership to determine the demand for jobs and the skills needed for those jobs and with  
27 adult education, training providers and postsecondary education institutions to develop or  
28 provide the appropriate education and training. For purposes of this subsection, one or  
29 more employers providing training for 5 or more workers, or a recognized trade  
30 association or industry convener, is considered an industry partnership under the  
31 program. The following criteria apply.

32 A. Training must be for prospective, new hire or incumbent workers. Prospective  
33 worker trainees must be guaranteed a job interview with at least one of the  
34 participating employers upon meeting the pretraining qualifications and the  
35 successful completion of training.

36 B. The employer or employers shall work with career centers within the bureau to  
37 select, hire and train individuals from a pool of qualified candidates for employment  
38 as full-time regular employees at the end of training.

39 C. The job training program must provide education or training for employment in a  
40 trade or industry with a significant demand for skilled labor, either statewide or in a  
41 region in this State, that has been identified by the Center for Workforce Research  
42 and Information within the Department of Labor as providing employment for high-  
43 compensation jobs or in an industry where technology or work practices have

1 significantly changed to require training to assist new workers to acquire needed  
2 skills or incumbent workers to remain current and competitive.

3 D. The participating employers must agree to hire persons who successfully  
4 complete the job training program at a post-training wage of at least \$2.50 per hour  
5 more than the minimum hourly wage rate as set in state law and to provide successful  
6 incumbent worker trainees with an increase in the hourly wage to meet or exceed the  
7 median wage for that occupation in this State as identified by the Center for  
8 Workforce Research and Information within the Department of Labor.

9 E. A person who successfully completes the job training program must be awarded a  
10 certificate, degree or similar credential that is universally recognized by the trade  
11 association or industry.

12 The bureau shall leverage existing workforce funds and training programs and providers  
13 to assist employers in providing training.

14 Priority for funding must be given to employers or industry partnerships that contribute at  
15 least a 50% or higher in-kind or direct training cost match and provide evidence of at  
16 least 2 of the following criteria: provision of fringe benefits; ongoing skill development  
17 or access to career pathways; an increase in the number of net new hires as a result of  
18 training; positive economic effects on the local or regional economy; short-term and long-  
19 term leveraging of other resources; training of individuals who have historically faced  
20 barriers to employment and individuals who are unemployed or underemployed; return  
21 on investment for the State, region, industry and trainees; and other factors described in  
22 the state workforce development plan of the State Workforce Investment Board.

23 **4. Administration.** The program is administered jointly by the Department of Labor  
24 and the State Workforce Investment Board under rules and operating procedures adopted  
25 by the Commissioner of Labor and the State Workforce Investment Board.  
26 Administrative costs are limited to 5% of program funds.

27 **5. Review of proposals.** An application for funding under the program for job  
28 training as described in subsection 2 must be reviewed on an as-needed basis by a review  
29 team made up of the program director of the bureau, the director of the bureau and the  
30 director of the State Workforce Investment Board. Awards must be prioritized using  
31 available funding. The review team, at its discretion, may deny an application and  
32 connect applicants to an alternative funding source if available or recommend an  
33 alternative industry partnership structure.

34 Proposals meeting the industry partnership criteria described in subsection 3 must be  
35 reviewed by the State Workforce Investment Board. Voting members of the State  
36 Workforce Investment Board must rank competing proposals by the criteria in subsection  
37 3, with available funding taken into consideration when determining final awards so as to  
38 maximize training for the most individuals and return on investment.

39 The State Workforce Investment Board, at its discretion, may deny an application and  
40 connect applicants to an alternative funding source if available or recommend an  
41 alternative industry partnership structure.

42 **6. Eligibility for funding.** Applicants eligible to receive funding from the program  
43 include, but are not limited to, employers, regional and local economic development

1 agencies or partnerships, community-based organizations, job training service providers,  
2 registered apprenticeship service providers, local adult education providers and  
3 postsecondary education institutions.

4 **7. Training.** Training provided under this section is considered approved training  
5 under the unemployment insurance laws and the laws regarding dislocated workers  
6 administered by the Department of Labor.

7 Training funds authorized under this section must be paid to the employer or training  
8 provider on a reimbursement basis.

9 Denied applicants may reapply in the following fiscal year.

10 **8. Report.** For any year in which the program is funded, the Commissioner of Labor  
11 and the director of the State Workforce Investment Board shall provide to the joint  
12 standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over labor, commerce, research  
13 and economic development matters a report by March 1st of the following year, which  
14 must include, for each business assisted under this subchapter, the name and location of  
15 the business, the number of individuals trained or retrained, the dollar amount expended  
16 and, when applicable, the number of new jobs created.

17 **9. Rules.** Rules adopted pursuant to this subchapter are routine technical rules as  
18 defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

19 **10. Nonlapsing funds.** Any unencumbered balance of General Fund appropriations  
20 remaining at the end of each fiscal year in the program may not lapse but must be carried  
21 forward to be used for the same purposes.

22 **Sec. 2. Appropriations and allocations.** The following appropriations and  
23 allocations are made.

24 **LABOR, DEPARTMENT OF**

25 **State Workforce Investment Board Z158**

26 Initiative: Provides funds to be used to match funding or in-kind contributions by  
27 businesses participating in the Put ME to Work Program.

28	<b>GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>
29	All Other	\$475,000	\$712,500
30			
31	GENERAL FUND TOTAL	<u>\$475,000</u>	<u>\$712,500</u>

32 **State Workforce Investment Board Z158**

33 Initiative: Provides funds to support a portion of the cost of one Labor Program Specialist  
34 position to manage the Put ME to Work Program.

1	<b>GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>
2	Personal Services	\$25,000	\$37,500
3			
4	GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$25,000	\$37,500
5	<b>LABOR, DEPARTMENT OF</b>		
6	<b>DEPARTMENT TOTALS</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>
7			
8	<b>GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>	<b>\$750,000</b>
9			
10	<b>DEPARTMENT TOTAL - ALL FUNDS</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>	<b>\$750,000</b>
11			

12 **SUMMARY**

13 This amendment, which is the minority report of the Joint Standing Committee on  
 14 Labor, Commerce, Research and Economic Development, strikes the bill and replaces it  
 15 with a workforce training program to be administered jointly by the Department of Labor  
 16 and the State Workforce Investment Board.

17 The amendment replaces the requirement in the bill that participating businesses  
 18 provide at least 50% of the cost of the program with a preference for such businesses  
 19 when granting applications. Additionally, for industry partnership applicants, 7 factors  
 20 are also taken into account when reviewing applications.

21 The amendment requires participating employers to hire trainees at a rate at least  
 22 \$2.50 per hour more than the state-mandated minimum hourly wage rate and to pay  
 23 incumbent worker trainees with an hourly wage that meets or exceeds the median wage  
 24 for that occupation as identified by the Center for Workforce Research and Information  
 25 within the Department of Labor.

26 The amendment eliminates the \$100,000 funding per fiscal year in the bill for the  
 27 Industry Partnership Assistance Collaborative and the \$900,000 per fiscal year funding in  
 28 the bill for the Maine Community College System's Maine Quality Centers. Funding is  
 29 instead directed to the State Workforce Investment Board at a level of \$500,000 in the  
 30 first fiscal year and \$750,000 in the 2nd fiscal year. This funding is to be used to match  
 31 contributions of participating businesses and to support a portion of the cost of one Labor  
 32 Program Specialist position to manage the Put ME to Work Program.

33 **FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED**

34 **(See attached)**