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HOUSE BILL NO. 2590

Offered January 13, 2025

Prefiled January 13, 2025

A *BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 22.1-204.3, relating to Virginia Student Training Employment Pipeline for U.S. Procurement (STEP UP) Grant Fund and Program established.*

Patrons—Cole, Clark, Feggans, Kent, Thomas, Anthony, Askew, Callsen, Cohen, Convirs-Fowler, Cousins, Delaney, Gardner, Glass, Hayes, Helmer, Henson, Hernandez, Herring, Hope, Jones, Keys-Gamarra, Krizek, Laufer, LeVere Bolling, Lopez, Maldonado, McClure, McQuinn, Milde, Mundon King, Price, Rasoul, Reaser, Seibold, Sewell, Shin, Singh, Sullivan, Tran, Ward, Watts and Willett; Senator: Salim

Referred to Committee on Education

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 22.1-204.3 as follows:

§ 22.1-204.3. Virginia Student Training Employment Pipeline for U.S. Procurement (STEP UP) Grant Fund and Program established.

A. *There is hereby created in the state treasury a special nonreverting fund to be known as the Virginia Student Training Employment Pipeline for U.S. Procurement (STEP UP) Grant Fund, referred to in this section as "the Fund." The Fund shall be established on the books of the Comptroller. All funds appropriated for such purpose and any gifts, donations, grants, bequests, and other funds received on its behalf shall be paid into the state treasury and credited to the Fund. Interest earned on moneys in the Fund shall remain in the Fund and be credited to it. Any moneys remaining in the Fund, including interest thereon, at the end of each fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund but shall remain in the Fund. Moneys in the Fund shall be used solely for the purposes of awarding grants to eligible students pursuant to the Virginia Student Training Employment Pipeline for U.S. Procurement (STEP UP) Grant Program established in accordance with the provisions of subsection B. Expenditures and disbursements from the Fund shall be made by the State Treasurer on warrants issued by the Comptroller upon written request signed by the Superintendent.*

B. *The Department shall establish and administer the Virginia Student Training Employment Pipeline for U.S. Procurement (STEP UP) Grant Program (the Program) for the purpose of awarding grants from the Fund on a competitive basis to any student enrolled in the eleventh or twelfth grade at a public high school in the Commonwealth or enrolled at a comprehensive community college or historically black college or university in the Commonwealth who enters into an agreement with an entity located in the relevant local school division or region that has a procurement contract with the federal government whereby such entity agrees to provide assistance to the student to obtain, prior to graduation, any federal security clearance at the public trust or national security level and any other education, training, or credential that is necessary for the student to be prepared for employment with such entity upon graduation in exchange for a commitment from the student to accept and remain in such an employment position for an agreed-upon period of time after graduation. The Department, in consultation with the Virginia Community College System and the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, shall establish such rules, policies, processes, and procedures as it deems necessary for the proper administration of the Program, including application and award criteria and timelines. In awarding grants pursuant to the Program, the Department shall give priority to students from middle-income or low-income families.*