

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
81R1321 ALB-D

S.B. 108
By: Ellis
Economic Development
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

There is a tremendous economic opportunity from renewable energy and energy efficiency in Texas. According to the Governor's State Energy Plan, two-thirds of jobs created in the energy sector over the next decade will be in the area of renewable energy. There is likely to be an even larger opportunity from energy efficiency. Green jobs are defined as jobs involving energy-efficient construction or retrofitting, renewable electric power, biofuels, recycling, energy efficiency assessments, manufacturing of sustainable products, and manufacturing using sustainable processes.

As proposed, S.B. 108 establishes a Green Jobs Skill Development Fund (fund) that could receive federal, state, or private funds. Modeled after the existing Skills Development Fund, it would provide funding for training programs for green job skills. A grant awarded by the fund must target training for one of the following: veterans, unemployed persons, green industry workers, workers in declining industries who could be retrained for high-wage green jobs, or energy workers who could be retrained for high-wage green jobs. A training program funded by a grant must be hosted by a regional partnership that includes at least one academic institution (university, college, or technical school), one public or private participating entity (such as a chamber of commerce or local employer), and one economic development authority.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Workforce Commission in SECTION 2 (Section 490D.035, Government Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 481.078, Government Code, by adding Subsection (1), to authorize the Texas Enterprise Fund to be used to make one or more grants to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to implement TWC's powers and duties relating to a green job skills training program. Provides that Subsections (e-1) and (f)-(j) do not apply to a grant under this subsection.

SECTION 2. Amends Subtitle F, Title 4, Government Code, by adding Chapter 490D, as follows:

CHAPTER 490D. GREEN JOB SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FUND AND TRAINING PROGRAM

SUBCHAPTER A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 490D.001. PURPOSE. Sets forth the purpose of this chapter.

Sec. 490D.002. DEFINITIONS. Defines "commission," "development fund," and "green job."

[Reserves Sections 490D.003-490D.020 for expansion.]

SUBCHAPTER B. GREEN JOB SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FUND

Sec. 490D.021. TEXAS GREEN JOB SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FUND. (a) Provides that the Texas green job skills development fund (development fund) is an account in the general revenue fund. Provides that the account is composed of legislative appropriations; money received from the Texas Enterprise Fund under Section 481.078 (Texas Enterprise Fund), gifts, grants, donations, and matching funds received under Subsection (b); and other money required by law to be deposited into the account.

(b) Authorizes TWC to solicit and accept gifts, grants, and donations of money from certain sources to be used for the purpose of this subchapter.

(c) Requires income from the money in the account to be credited to the account.

(d) Authorizes that money in the development fund be used only for the purposes of this chapter.

[Reserves Sections 490D.022-490D.030 for expansion.]

SUBCHAPTER C. GREEN JOB SKILLS GRANT PROGRAM

Sec. 490D.031. ESTABLISHMENT OF GREEN JOB SKILLS GRANT PROGRAM. Requires TWC to establish a green job skills grant program, funded by the development fund under Section 490D.021, through which TWC is authorized to award grants for the implementation, expansion, and operation of green job skills training programs.

Sec. 490D.032. GRANT PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS. (a) Requires that a training program funded through a grant awarded under this subchapter meet certain requirements and provide certain services.

(b) Requires that a training program awarded a grant under this subchapter target a population of eligible individuals for training that includes certain workers, veterans, and individuals.

(c) Authorizes a training program to receive funding under this chapter for a period of no longer than three years.

Sec. 490D.033. APPLICATION. (a) Authorizes a regional partnership, as described by Section 490D.032, to apply for a grant under this subchapter in the manner prescribed by TWC.

(b) Requires that the grant application require the applicant to provide to TWC the applicant's plan to continue to operate the training program after the grant expires.

Sec. 490D.034. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS IN AWARDING GRANTS. Requires TWC, in addition to the factors described by Sections 490D.032 and 490D.033, in determining whether to award a grant to an applicant under this chapter, to give preference to a training program that provides certification to a worker who receives green job skills training under the program.

Sec. 490D.035. STANDARDS. Requires TWC by rule to adopt standards for a green job skills training program awarded a grant under this subchapter.

SECTION 3. Requires TWC to adopt rules for the program under Subchapter C, Chapter 490D, Government Code, as added by this Act, not later than March 1, 2010.

SECTION 4. Provides that implementation of this program under Subchapter C, Chapter 490D, Government Code, as added by this Act, is contingent on appropriation of funding by the legislature.

SECTION 5. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2009.