

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. _____

To establish jobs programs for long-term unemployed workers, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. VAN HOLLEN introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To establish jobs programs for long-term unemployed workers, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Ready to Work Act
5 of 2026”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS; PURPOSES.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Entering 2026, long-term unemployment in
9 the United States was at its highest level in 4 years.

1 (2) In July 2026, 1,800,000 workers had been
2 unemployed for 6 months or more.

3 (3) The long-term unemployed accounted for
4 25.5 percent of all unemployed people in July 2026.

5 (4) Confidence in the job market has fallen 42
6 percentage points since the start of 2022 and was
7 especially low among young workers at the beginning
8 of 2026.

9 (5) The people of the United States are pessi-
10 mistic about the impact of artificial intelligence on
11 jobs. As of March 2026, 70 percent of people in the
12 United States thought artificial intelligence is likely
13 to lead to a decrease in the number of job opportuni-
14 ties for workers, up from 56 percent in April 2025.

15 (b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act are to—

16 (1) help people overcome the barriers keeping
17 them out of the workforce (such as transportation,
18 child care, job readiness training, substance abuse
19 treatment, or assistance finding a permanent job)
20 and training programs that build skills to sustain
21 permanent employment;

22 (2) provide targeted funding to local areas to
23 generate work opportunities and get people in the
24 United States back into the workforce; and

1 (3) provide grants to local areas to support in-
2 novation and investment in areas hit hardest by high
3 poverty and chronic joblessness.

4 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

5 In this Act:

6 (1) CAREER SERVICES.—The term “career serv-
7 ices” includes the services described in section
8 134(c)(2)(A) of the Workforce Innovation and Op-
9 portunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3174(c)(2)(A)).

10 (2) COVERED AREA.—The term “covered area”
11 means the local area in which a local board is car-
12 rying out a jobs program, or (in the circumstances
13 described in section 4(d)) the local area in which a
14 community-based organization is carrying out a jobs
15 program, under this Act.

16 (3) ELIGIBLE WORKER.—The term “eligible
17 worker” means an individual who—

18 (A) is not less than 18 years old;

19 (B) is authorized to be employed in the
20 United States for purposes of section 274A of
21 the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C.
22 1324a);

23 (C) has not been employed or a full-time
24 student for a period of not less than 27 weeks
25 (except as modified under section 5(e)); and

1 (D) is currently seeking employment and
2 has been seeking employment for a period of
3 not less than 4 weeks (except as modified under
4 section 5(e)).

5 (4) INDIVIDUAL WITH A BARRIER TO EMPLOY-
6 MENT.—The term “individual with a barrier to em-
7 ployment” has the meaning given in section 3(24) of
8 the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29
9 U.S.C. 3102(24)), except that such term shall not
10 include individuals who meet the terms of the defini-
11 tion in that section solely on the basis of their status
12 as long-term unemployed individuals.

13 (5) ON-THE-JOB TRAINING.—The term “on-the-
14 job training” has the meaning given the term in sec-
15 tion 3(44) of the Workforce Innovation and Oppor-
16 tunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102(44)), except that sub-
17 paragraph (B) of that section shall not apply.

18 (6) PARTICIPATING EMPLOYER.—The term
19 “participating employer” means an employer—

20 (A) that is—

- 21 (i) a government agency;
22 (ii) a nonprofit organization;
23 (iii) operating as an employment so-
24 cial enterprise; or
25 (iv) a business; and

1 (B) includes—

2 (i) an employer at the site of employ-
3 ment for an eligible worker in a program
4 position; or

5 (ii) a community-based organization
6 that acts as an employer of record by—

7 (I) assuming the roles and re-
8 sponsibilities assigned to employers
9 described in clause (i) under this Act;

10 (II) entering into an agreement
11 with an employer described in clause
12 (i) to set forth the terms and condi-
13 tions for employment of an eligible
14 worker in a program position in a jobs
15 program in accordance with the provi-
16 sions of this Act; and

17 (III) acting as an intermediary
18 between eligible workers and employ-
19 ers described in clause (i) to facilitate
20 participation in the jobs program in-
21 volved.

22 (7) PAYROLL TAXES.—The term “payroll
23 taxes” means taxes under section 3111, 3221, 3301,
24 or 3321 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and
25 any similar State or local tax imposed on employers.

(8) PRE-APPRENTICESHIP.—The term “pre-apprenticeship”, used with respect to a program, means a program that is designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in a registered apprenticeship program and is carried out by an entity that has a documented partnership with at least one sponsor of a registered apprenticeship program.

8 (9) PROGRAM POSITION.—

9 (A) IN GENERAL.—The term “program po-
10 sition”, used with respect to a jobs program—

11 (i) means a position—

(I) in a temporary job that is designed to lead to long-term employment; and

(II) that is provided along with,
as necessary, career services, sup-
portive services, and training services
to enable an individual to succeed in
the job and obtain and retain long-
term employment; and

21 (ii) includes—

22 (I) a position in a transitional
23 job;

(II) a position in a registered apprenticeship program; and

1 (III) an approved national service
2 position made available under section
3 129 of the National and Community
4 Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C.
5 12581), including a position spon-
6 sored under subsection (i) of that sec-
7 tion, subject to subparagraph (B).

8 (B) RULE.—

9 (i) EMPLOYERS WITH CERTAIN PRO-
10 GRAM POSITIONS.—A participating em-
11 ployer for an eligible worker (or an em-
12 ployer at the site of employment for an eli-
13 gible worker) in a program position de-
14 scribed in subparagraph (A)(ii)(III) shall
15 be considered to be a service sponsor, as
16 defined in section 101 of the National and
17 Community Service Act of 1990 (42
18 U.S.C. 12511).

19 (ii) ELIGIBLE WORKERS IN CERTAIN
20 PROGRAM POSITIONS.—In parity with sec-
21 tion 101(30) of the National and Commu-
22 nity Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C.
23 12511(30)), an eligible worker in such a
24 program position shall not be considered to
25 be an employee of the participating em-

1 ployer (or of an employer at the site of em-
2 ployment for the eligible worker).

3 (10) RECOGNIZED POSTSECONDARY CREDEN-
4 TIAL.—The term “recognized postsecondary creden-
5 tial” means such a credential as defined in section
6 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
7 (29 U.S.C. 3102), if the provider of the program
8 leading to the credential is identified under section
9 122(h) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 3152(h)).

10 (11) REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PRO-
11 GRAM.—The term “registered apprenticeship pro-
12 gram” means a program registered under the Act of
13 August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the “National
14 Apprenticeship Act”; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29
15 U.S.C. 50 et seq.).

16 (12) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary”
17 means the Secretary of Labor.

18 (13) TRANSITIONAL JOB.—The term “transi-
19 tional job” means a job described in section
20 134(d)(5) of the Workforce Innovation and Oppor-
21 tunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3174(d)(5)), without regard
22 to the limitation described in that section on funding
23 for such jobs.

24 (14) WIOA TERMS.—The terms “adult edu-
25 cation and literacy activities”, “career pathway”,

1 “community-based organization”, “customized train-
2 ing”, “industry or sector partnership”, “in-demand
3 industry sector or occupation”, “integrated edu-
4 cation and training”, “local area”, “local board”,
5 “one-stop operator”, “poverty line”, “State area”,
6 “State board”, “supportive services”, “training serv-
7 ices”, and “veteran” have the meanings given the
8 terms in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and
9 Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102).

10 (15) WORKER-OWNED ENTERPRISE.—

11 (A) IN GENERAL.—The term “worker-
12 owned enterprise” means—

13 (i) an eligible worker-owned coopera-
14 tive, as defined in section 1042(c)(2) of the
15 Internal Revenue Code of 1986; or

16 (ii) an enterprise for which the major-
17 ity of the voting stock is owned by workers
18 employed by such enterprise.

19 (B) VOTING STOCK.—For purposes of sub-
20 paragraph (A)(ii), the share of the voting stock
21 owned by workers shall include stock held by an
22 employee stock ownership plan, as defined in
23 section 4975(e)(7) of such Code.

1 **SEC. 4. JOBS PROGRAMS FOR LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED**
2 **WORKERS.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—

4 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall es-
5 tablish and administer a jobs initiative for eligible
6 workers, consisting of jobs programs carried out
7 through local boards.

8 (2) PARTNERSHIPS.—A local board may enter
9 into a partnership with one or more community-
10 based organizations to submit an application and
11 carry out a jobs program.

12 (3) AGREEMENTS.—In administering the initia-
13 tive, the Secretary shall enter into 4-year agree-
14 ments with local boards, under which the Secretary
15 shall provide payments to local boards. Such an
16 agreement shall specify which functions described in
17 this Act will be carried out by the local board, by the
18 community-based organization, and by the partner-
19 ship.

20 (4) PAYMENTS.—The Secretary shall make
21 such a payment in an amount that equals the eligi-
22 ble costs incurred by the local board—

23 (A) to provide wages and compensation for
24 program positions for eligible workers under
25 this section, minus any employer share of the

1 eligible costs of providing the wages and com-
2 pensation;

3 (B) to provide career services, supportive
4 services, and training services to eligible work-
5 ers under this section; and

6 (C) to administer the jobs program under
7 this section.

8 (b) LOCAL BOARD APPLICATION.—To be eligible to
9 enter into an agreement under subsection (a), a local
10 board shall submit an application to the Secretary at such
11 time, in such manner, and containing a 4-year plan that
12 includes such information as the Secretary may require,
13 including—

14 (1) the number of eligible workers that the local
15 board proposes to serve under the jobs program in-
16 volved and the estimated cost of serving that number
17 of workers;

18 (2) a plan for one-stop operators to identify the
19 issues preventing each eligible worker served by the
20 jobs program from securing employment, and to re-
21 duce the impact of those issues with career services,
22 supportive services, and training services;

23 (3) a description of how the local board will en-
24 gage labor organizations, joint labor-management or-
25 ganizations, community-based organizations, commu-

1 nity colleges, economic development agencies, and
2 career and technical education programs as partners
3 to provide training services to eligible workers, in-
4 cluding any—

5 (A) adult education and literacy activities,
6 including activities of English language acquisi-
7 tion, and integrated education and training pro-
8 grams;

9 (B) pre-apprenticeship and registered ap-
10 prenticeship programs; and

11 (C) career pathways;

12 (4) a description of how the local board will
13 support the creation and expansion of industry or
14 sector partnerships and alignment of the jobs pro-
15 gram with career pathways to improve outcomes for
16 eligible workers in program positions;

17 (5) proposed levels for the performance ac-
18 countability measures described in subsection (c);

19 (6) a description of the controls established by
20 the local board to assure that the local board—

21 (A) disburses funding to each participating
22 employer for all eligible costs described in sub-
23 section (h) incurred under the jobs program,
24 minus the employer share described in sub-
25 section (i);

1 (B) oversees participating employers to en-
2 sure compliance with program rules and collec-
3 tion of accurate data for performance account-
4 ability measures described in subsection (c);
5 and

6 (C) requests accurate advance payment or
7 reimbursement for the eligible costs described
8 in subsection (h), minus any employer share de-
9 scribed in subsection (i) of the eligible costs;

10 (7) a description of how the local board will col-
11 laborate with the corresponding State board to im-
12 plement the jobs program and align such program
13 with the plan submitted by the corresponding State
14 board under subtitle A of title I of the Workforce In-
15 novation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3111 et
16 seq.);

17 (8) a description of how the local board will
18 align the activities carried out under the grant with
19 the activities carried out under—

20 (A) the plans submitted by the local board
21 under subtitle A of title I of the Workforce In-
22 novation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3111
23 et seq.);

24 (B) the employment and training program
25 established by the corresponding State under

1 the supplemental nutrition assistance program
2 established under the Food and Nutrition Act
3 of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.);

4 (C) the corresponding State program for
5 temporary assistance for needy families estab-
6 lished under part A of title IV of the Social Se-
7 curity Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.);

8 (D) the national service plan submitted by
9 the corresponding State Commission on Na-
10 tional and Community Service under section
11 178 of the National and Community Service
12 Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12638);

13 (E) programs established under the Second
14 Chance Act of 2007 (34 U.S.C. 60501 et seq.);

15 (F) employment and community develop-
16 ment programs carried out by the Secretary of
17 Housing and Urban Development;

18 (G) career and technical education pro-
19 grams authorized by the Carl D. Perkins Ca-
20 reer and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20
21 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.);

22 (H) the continuum of care projects (relat-
23 ing to ending homelessness) carried out under
24 applications submitted, by communities serving
25 an area that is substantially similar to the cov-

1 ered area, under subtitle C of title IV of the
2 McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42
3 U.S.C. 11381 et seq.);

4 (I) programs to support competitive inte-
5 grated employment for individuals with disabil-
6 ities, including programs of vocational rehabili-
7 tation services under title I of the Rehabilita-
8 tion Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.) and
9 the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Pro-
10 gram carried out under section 1148 of the So-
11 cial Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320b–19);

12 (J) the program of employment services
13 provided under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29
14 U.S.C. 49 et seq.); and

15 (K) employment and training programs for
16 veterans; and

17 (9) assurances that—

18 (A) prior to the placement of an eligible
19 worker in a program position, the local board
20 will consult with the appropriate local labor or-
21 ganization, if any, representing employees in
22 the covered area who are engaged in the same
23 or similar work as that proposed to be carried
24 out by the eligible worker, to prevent the dis-

1 placement and protect the rights of such em-
2 ployees; and

3 (B) the local board will comply with the
4 nondisplacement provisions of subsection (f)
5 and the grievance procedures of subsection (g).

6 (c) PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—For each local board, the
8 performance accountability measures shall consist of
9 the indicators described in paragraph (2) and the
10 levels described in paragraph (3).

11 (2) INDICATORS.—The indicators for the per-
12 formance accountability measures shall consist of—

13 (A) the primary indicators of performance
14 described in section 116(b)(2)(A)(i) of the
15 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29
16 U.S.C. 3141(b)(2)(A)(i));

17 (B) the number of eligible workers placed
18 in jobs created by the jobs program of the local
19 board;

20 (C) for households with an eligible worker
21 who participated in the program, the average
22 increase in income by the end of such participa-
23 tion; and

1 (D) the percentage of program positions
2 filled by eligible workers who were individuals
3 with a barrier to employment.

4 (3) ACCEPTABLE OVERALL LEVELS OF PER-
5 FORMANCE.—The local board shall reach agreement
6 with the Secretary, acting in consultation with the
7 Secretary of Education, on acceptable overall levels
8 of performance for each indicator described in para-
9 graph (2) for each year covered by the application
10 submitted under subsection (b). In reaching such
11 agreements, the local board and the Secretaries shall
12 take into account—

13 (A) the purpose of this Act, as described in
14 section 2, by seeking to provide job opportuni-
15 ties for as many eligible workers as possible;
16 and

17 (B) the factors described in section
18 116(b)(3)(A)(v) of the Workforce Innovation
19 and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C.
20 3141(b)(3)(A)(v)), except that references in
21 that section to a State shall be considered to be
22 references to a local area.

23 (4) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—

24 (A) IN GENERAL.—The local board shall
25 provide information specifying the board's level

1 of performance on the performance account-
2 ability measures specified in this subsection, in-
3 cluding disaggregated data specified under sub-
4 paragraph (B), as part of the local board per-
5 formance reports established under section
6 116(d) of the Workforce Innovation and Oppor-
7 tunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3141(d)).

8 (B) DISAGGREGATED DATA.—Each such
9 performance report shall include data specifying
10 the board’s level of performance with respect to
11 individuals with barriers to employment,
12 disaggregated by each subpopulation of such in-
13 dividuals, and by race, ethnicity, sex, and age.

14 (d) SANCTIONS FOR FAILURE TO MEET PERFORM-
15 ANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES OR SUBMIT AN APPLI-
16 CATION.—

17 (1) PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND
18 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—If a local board fails to
19 meet performance accountability measures specified
20 in subsection (c)—

21 (A) the local board shall develop a per-
22 formance improvement plan; and

23 (B) the Secretary and State board may
24 provide technical assistance, including assist-

1 ance in the development of the performance im-
2 provement plan.

3 (2) REPEATED FAILURE TO MEET PERFORM-
4 ANCE ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES.—If a local board
5 fails to meet the performance accountability meas-
6 ures for at least 3 consecutive years, the Secretary
7 may enter into an agreement with a community-
8 based organization to carry out a jobs program serv-
9 ing the corresponding local area in place of the local
10 board.

11 (3) FAILURE TO SUBMIT APPLICATION.—

12 (A) IN GENERAL.—If a local board fails to
13 submit an application under subsection (b) by
14 the such date as the Secretary may require—

15 (i) the Secretary shall notify the local
16 board of the local board's failure to submit
17 such application; and

18 (ii) the Secretary and State board
19 may provide technical assistance to enable
20 the local board to submit such application.

21 (B) FAILURE TO SUBMIT APPLICATION
22 FOR 1 YEAR OR LONGER.—If a local board fails
23 to submit an application under subsection (b)
24 for 1 year or longer after the date described in
25 subparagraph (A), the Secretary may enter into

1 an agreement with a community-based organi-
2 zation to carry out a jobs program serving the
3 corresponding local area in place of the local
4 board.

5 (4) PROGRAMS CARRIED OUT BY COMMUNITY-
6 BASED ORGANIZATIONS.—

7 (A) APPLICATION.—A community-based
8 organization that seeks to carry out a jobs pro-
9 gram in place of a local board as described in
10 paragraph (2) or (3) shall submit an applica-
11 tion to the Secretary.

12 (B) SELECTION.—The Secretary shall se-
13 lect, on a competitive basis, community-based
14 organizations to carry out jobs programs as de-
15 scribed in paragraphs (2) and (3) for a local
16 area. The Secretary shall select such organiza-
17 tions based on their ability to implement a jobs
18 program that achieves the highest levels on the
19 performance accountability measures, taking
20 into account the factors described in section
21 116(b)(3)(A)(v) of the Workforce Innovation
22 and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C.
23 3141(b)(3)(A)(v)), except that references in
24 that section to a State shall be considered to be

1 references to a local area, and meets the other
2 requirements specified in this Act.

3 (C) RENEWAL.—After the initial selection
4 under subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall,
5 every 4 years, hold a new competition to select
6 community-based organizations to carry out
7 jobs programs for local areas. The local board
8 for such an area may also submit an application
9 in such competition.

10 (D) IMPLEMENTATION.—This Act shall
11 apply to a community-based organization se-
12 lected under this paragraph as if the organiza-
13 tion was the local board for the corresponding
14 local area.

15 (e) PARTICIPATING EMPLOYER.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—Participating employers
17 shall be selected by a local board. An entity who
18 seeks to be a participating employer shall enter into
19 an agreement with the local board to act as a par-
20 ticipating employer under this subsection.

21 (2) SELECTION CRITERIA.—

22 (A) IN GENERAL.—To select participating
23 employers (including the renewal of such a se-
24 lection), the local board shall take into account
25 the considerations, and comply with the require-

1 ments, specified in subparagraphs (B) through
2 (H).

3 (B) WORKER FEEDBACK.—The local board
4 shall provide an opportunity for eligible workers
5 to provide feedback on participating employers,
6 and shall take this feedback into account when
7 determining whether to renew the selection of
8 an employer.

9 (C) LABOR ORGANIZATIONS.—

10 (i) IN GENERAL.—The local board
11 shall consider input from labor organiza-
12 tions and joint labor-management organi-
13 zations to select participating employers.

14 (ii) COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREE-
15 MENTS.—For a site of employment at
16 which workers are covered by a collective
17 bargaining agreement, the local board shall
18 not place a program participant in a pro-
19 gram position at the site without the con-
20 sent of all labor organizations and joint
21 labor-management organizations rep-
22 resenting workers at such site.

23 (D) LONG-TERM EMPLOYMENT PROS-
24 PECTS.—The local board shall consider whether
25 the employer under consideration is proposing

1 or providing an experience that will help eligible
2 workers secure long-term employment after the
3 program position ends, either with the partici-
4 pating employer or another employer.

5 (E) COMMUNITY IMPACT AND INPUT.—

6 (i) COMMUNITY IMPACT PREF-
7 ERENCE.—The local board shall consider
8 whether the employer is offering program
9 positions in which the work to be per-
10 formed is designed to have a positive im-
11 pact on the communities in the covered
12 area served through the jobs program, and
13 shall develop criteria for that positive im-
14 pact based on input from members of such
15 communities.

16 (ii) COMMUNITY INPUT.—The local
17 board shall also provide an opportunity for
18 such communities to provide input on how
19 a participating employer should be selected
20 and whether specific employers should be
21 selected, and shall take this input into ac-
22 count when selecting a participating em-
23 ployer.

24 (F) IN-DEMAND INDUSTRY SECTOR OR OC-
25 CUPATION.—The local board shall consider

1 whether the employer is offering program posi-
2 tions that lead to employment in an in-demand
3 industry sector or occupation.

4 (G) TYPE OF BUSINESS.—The local board
5 shall consider whether the employer is—

6 (i) a worker-owned enterprise; or

7 (ii) a small business concern owned
8 and controlled by women, a small business
9 concern owned and controlled by socially
10 and economically disadvantaged individ-
11 uals, a small business concern owned and
12 controlled by veterans, or a qualified
13 HUBZone small business concern, as those
14 4 terms are defined in section 8(d)(3) of
15 the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C.
16 637(d)(3)).

17 (H) OTHER FACTORS.—The local board
18 may consider other factors, besides the factors
19 explicitly stated in this paragraph, that are rel-
20 evant to achieving the performance account-
21 ability measures and other requirements speci-
22 fied in this Act.

23 (3) PARTICIPATING EMPLOYER DUTIES.—The
24 participating employer shall—

1 (A) provide wages for each eligible worker
2 in a program position at a rate that—

3 (i) is not less than the greatest of the
4 3 rates described in subsection (h)(1)(B);

5 (ii) is not less than the customary
6 rate paid by the employer for the same or
7 similar work performed by other employees
8 who—

9 (I) are not eligible workers in
10 program positions;

11 (II) are similarly situated in
12 similar occupations by the same em-
13 ployer; and

14 (III) have similar training, expe-
15 rience, and skills; and

16 (iii) is in accordance with any applica-
17 ble collective bargaining agreements at the
18 site of employment;

19 (B) provide benefits for each eligible work-
20 er in a program position—

21 (i) at the same level as is provided to
22 other employees who are not eligible work-
23 ers in program positions; and

1 (ii) in accordance with any applicable
2 collective bargaining agreements at the site
3 of employment;

4 (C) ensure that the site of employment is
5 a location where an eligible worker in a pro-
6 gram position who is an individual with a dis-
7 ability, as defined in section 7 of the Rehabilita-
8 tion Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 705), interacts
9 with other persons who are not such individuals
10 with disabilities (not including supervisory per-
11 sonnel or individuals who are providing services
12 to such worker) to the same extent as individ-
13 uals who are not such individuals with disabil-
14 ities and who are in comparable positions inter-
15 act with other persons;

16 (D) offer opportunities for advancement to
17 eligible workers in program positions, as appro-
18 priate, that are similar to those for other em-
19 ployees who are not eligible workers in program
20 positions; and

21 (E) fulfill legal and administrative duties
22 including payroll processing, tax withholding
23 and documentation, making deductions for any
24 applicable labor organization dues, and meeting

1 liability requirements such as workers' com-
2 pensation requirements.

3 (4) REQUIRED REPORT BY ELIGIBLE WORKER
4 BEFORE ELIGIBILITY.—In order to be eligible for a
5 program position with a participating employer, an
6 eligible worker shall, to the best of their abilities and
7 before submitting any application for such a posi-
8 tion, submit to the Secretary of Labor a report that
9 provides—

10 (A) the duration, location, industry, em-
11 ployer, and job title of the most recent employ-
12 ment of the eligible worker before submission of
13 the report;

14 (B) the reason such employment ended;

15 (C) a description of any artificial intel-
16 ligence used in such employment; and

17 (D) a description of any artificial intel-
18 ligence used during the employment-seeking
19 process of the eligible worker described in sec-
20 tion 3(3)(D), including during hiring, resume
21 screening, or the interview process.

22 (5) PAYMENT TO PARTICIPATING EMPLOYER.—

23 (A) WAGES AND COMPENSATION.—The
24 local board shall provide payment to the partici-
25 pating employer for all eligible costs described

1 in subsection (h) for wages and compensation
2 provided by the employer for eligible workers in
3 program positions, minus the employer share
4 described in subsection (i).

5 (B) EMPLOYER-PROVIDED TRAINING.—

6 The local board may enter into an agreement
7 with the participating employer under which the
8 employer provides on-the-job training or cus-
9 tomized training to eligible workers, and, sub-
10 ject to subsection (h)(3), the local board pro-
11 vides payment to reimburse the employer for
12 the cost of providing the training described in
13 the agreement.

14 (f) NONDISPLACEMENT.—

15 (1) NONDISPLACEMENT OF EXISTING EMPLOY-
16 EES.—The participating employer shall not place an
17 eligible worker hired for a jobs program in a position
18 under this Act if—

19 (A) employing such individual will result in
20 the layoff or partial displacement (such as a re-
21 duction in hours, wages, or employment bene-
22 fits) of an existing employee (as of the date of
23 the hiring) of the employer;

1 (B) such individual will assume any of the
2 duties or responsibilities of an employee who is
3 on strike;

4 (C) employing such individual infringes
5 upon the promotional opportunities of an exist-
6 ing employee (as of the date of the hiring) of
7 the employer; or

8 (D) such individual will perform the same
9 work or substantially the same work as that
10 performed by any individual, employed by the
11 employer at the site of employment, who—

12 (i) has been laid off or partially dis-
13 placed (as such term is described in sub-
14 paragraph (A)); and

15 (ii) has not been offered by to be re-
16 stored to the position the employee had im-
17 mediately prior to being laid off or par-
18 tially displaced.

19 (2) PROHIBITION ON ROTATION.—The partici-
20 pating employer may not make placements in a pro-
21 gram position by constantly rotating new eligible
22 workers into a permanent position temporarily, ex-
23 cept in circumstances in which—

24 (A) the employer reasonably intends to
25 promote each such eligible worker to a different

1 permanent position within the employer's busi-
2 ness at the end of that worker's employment in
3 the program position; or

4 (B) the program position is part of an on-
5 the-job training program that leads to a recog-
6 nized postsecondary credential.

7 (3) NONDISPLACEMENT OF GOVERNMENT EM-
8 PLOYEES OR FUNCTIONS.—

9 (A) GOVERNMENT AGENCY.—A partici-
10 pating employer that is a government agency
11 may not place an eligible worker hired for a
12 jobs program in an existing position (as of the
13 date of the hiring) that is subject to civil service
14 laws of a Federal, State, or local government.

15 (B) OTHER PARTICIPATING EMPLOYER.—
16 A participating employer that is not a govern-
17 ment agency may not use funds provided under
18 this Act to provide services or carry out other
19 functions that are customarily provided by a
20 unit of State government or general local gov-
21 ernment.

22 (4) LIMITATION ON PROGRAM POSITIONS FOR
23 PARTICIPATING EMPLOYER.—

24 (A) IN GENERAL.—No more than 10 per-
25 cent of the employees of a participating em-

1 ployer may be in program positions funded
2 under this Act, except as provided in any of
3 subparagraphs (B) through (E).

4 (B) MINIMUM.—A participating employer
5 with fewer than 10 employees may employ 1 in-
6 dividual in a program position funded under
7 this Act.

8 (C) MAXIMUM.—A participating employer
9 with more than 1,000 employees may employ
10 not more than 100 individuals in program posi-
11 tions funded under this Act, unless the em-
12 ployer obtains permission under subparagraph
13 (D).

14 (D) PERMISSION.—

15 (i) IN GENERAL.—A local board may
16 grant permission for a participating em-
17 ployer to have a higher percentage or num-
18 ber of employees in program positions than
19 is allowed under subparagraph (A) or
20 (C)—

21 (I) under the circumstance de-
22 scribed in subclause (I) or (II) of
23 clause (ii); or

24 (II) under the circumstance de-
25 scribed in clause (ii)(III), with the

1 consent of all labor organizations and
2 joint labor-management organizations
3 representing workers at the site in-
4 volved.

5 (ii) CIRCUMSTANCES.—The cir-
6 cumstances described in this clause are
7 any of the following:

8 (I) A circumstance in which the
9 most recent 3-month average of the
10 unemployment rate in the covered
11 area is not less than 8 percent.

12 (II) A circumstance in which the
13 employer is a worker-owned enterprise
14 and worker-ownership is widely avail-
15 able to the employer's employees, in-
16 cluding eligible workers in program
17 positions.

18 (III) A circumstance in which a
19 collective bargaining agreement covers
20 eligible workers in program positions
21 at a site of employment.

22 (iii) DURATION.—

23 (I) IN GENERAL.—An employer
24 granted the permission described in
25 clause (i) under the circumstance de-

1 scribed in clause (ii)(I) may be grant-
2 ed such permission for a term of not
3 more than 2 years, subject to sub-
4 clause (II), regardless of whether the
5 unemployment rate in the covered
6 area falls below 8 percent during that
7 2-year period.

8 (II) RENEWAL.—If the permis-
9 sion is granted under a circumstance
10 described in clause (ii)(I) and is
11 scheduled to expire in 3 months or
12 less, and if the most recent 3-month
13 average of the unemployment rate in
14 the covered area is not less than 8
15 percent, the local board may renew
16 the permission for another term de-
17 scribed in subclause (I).

18 (E) APPLICATION TO GOVERNMENT AGEN-
19 CY.—If the employer is a Federal, State, or
20 local agency, the limitations described in sub-
21 paragraphs (A), (B), and (C) shall be applied
22 separately to each unit within that agency.

23 (F) MODIFICATION.—The requirements of
24 this paragraph may be modified under section
25 5(e).

1 (G) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this
2 paragraph and subsection (g), the term “par-
3 ticipating employer” shall not include a commu-
4 nity-based organization that acts as an em-
5 ployer of record and (even if a community-
6 based organization is so acting) shall include
7 the employer at the site.

8 (g) GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—The local board shall estab-
10 lish and maintain a procedure for the filing and ad-
11 judication of grievances from participants, labor or-
12 ganizations, or joint labor-management organiza-
13 tions, and other interested individuals concerning
14 participating employers, including grievances relat-
15 ing to proposed placements of eligible workers with
16 such employers.

17 (2) DEADLINE FOR GRIEVANCES.—Except for a
18 grievance that alleges fraud or criminal activity, a
19 grievance shall be filed not later than 1 year after
20 the date of the alleged occurrence of the event that
21 is the subject of the grievance.

22 (3) DEADLINE FOR HEARING AND DECISION.—

23 (A) HEARING.—A hearing on any griev-
24 ance conducted under this subsection shall be

1 conducted not later than 30 days after the fil-
2 ing of such grievance.

3 (B) DECISION.—A decision on any such
4 grievance shall be made not later than 60 days
5 after the filing of such grievance.

6 (4) ARBITRATION.—

7 (A) IN GENERAL.—

8 (i) JOINTLY SELECTED ARBI-
9 TRATOR.—In the event of a decision on a
10 grievance that is adverse to the party who
11 filed the grievance, or 60 days after the fil-
12 ing of such grievance if no decision has
13 been reached, such party shall be per-
14 mitted to submit such grievance to binding
15 arbitration before a qualified arbitrator
16 who is jointly selected and independent of
17 the interested parties.

18 (ii) APPOINTED ARBITRATOR.—If the
19 parties cannot agree on an arbitrator, the
20 Secretary shall appoint an arbitrator from
21 a list of qualified arbitrators within 15
22 days after receiving a request for such ap-
23 pointment from one of the parties to the
24 grievance.

1 (B) DEADLINE FOR PROCEEDING.—An ar-
2 bitration proceeding shall be held not later than
3 45 days after the request for such arbitration
4 proceeding, or, if the arbitrator is appointed by
5 the Secretary in accordance with subparagraph
6 (A)(ii), not later than 30 days after the ap-
7 pointment of such arbitrator.

8 (C) DEADLINE FOR DECISION.—A decision
9 concerning a grievance shall be made not later
10 than 30 days after the date such arbitration
11 proceeding begins.

12 (D) COST.—

13 (i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided
14 in clause (ii), the cost of an arbitration
15 proceeding shall be divided evenly between
16 the parties to the arbitration.

17 (ii) EXCEPTION.—If a participant,
18 labor organization, joint labor-management
19 organization, or other interested individual
20 described in paragraph (1) prevails under
21 a binding arbitration proceeding, the other
22 entity that is a party to such grievance
23 shall pay the total cost of such proceeding
24 and the attorneys' fees of such participant,

1 labor organization, or individual, as the
2 case may be.

3 (5) PROPOSED PLACEMENT.—If a grievance is
4 filed regarding a proposed placement of an eligible
5 worker with a participating employer, such place-
6 ment shall not be made unless the placement is con-
7 sistent with the resolution of the grievance pursuant
8 to this subsection.

9 (6) REMEDIES.—Remedies for a grievance filed
10 under this subsection include—

11 (A) suspension of payments for the partici-
12 pating employer;

13 (B) termination of such payments;

14 (C) prohibition of the placement described
15 in paragraph (5);

16 (D) in a case in which the grievance is
17 filed by an individual eligible worker or pro-
18 gram participant—

19 (i) the eligible worker's selection to be
20 a program participant, or the program
21 participant's reinstatement, as the case
22 may be; and

23 (ii) other changes in the terms and
24 conditions of employment applicable to the
25 individual; and

1 (E) in a case in which the grievance in-
2 volves a violation of subsection (f) and the em-
3 ployer of the displaced employee is the partici-
4 pating employer—

5 (i) reinstatement of the displaced em-
6 ployee to the position held by such em-
7 ployee prior to displacement;

8 (ii) payment of lost wages and bene-
9 fits of the displaced employee;

10 (iii) reestablishment of other relevant
11 terms, conditions, and privileges of employ-
12 ment of the displaced employee; and

13 (iv) such equitable relief as is nec-
14 essary to correct any violation of sub-
15 section (f) or to make the displaced em-
16 ployee whole.

17 (7) ENFORCEMENT.—Suits to enforce awards
18 under this subsection may be brought in any district
19 court of the United States having jurisdiction of the
20 parties, without regard to the amount in controversy
21 and without regard to the citizenship of the parties.

22 (8) EXISTING GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES.—Not-
23 withstanding any other provision of this subsection,
24 a grievance relating to a site of employment that is
25 covered by a collective bargaining agreement that in-

1 includes a grievance procedure that applies to such
2 grievance shall be adjudicated under the terms of
3 such grievance procedure and not this subsection.
4 Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to limit
5 the application of any grievance procedure included
6 in a collective bargaining agreement.

7 (h) ELIGIBLE COSTS.—

8 (1) WAGES AND COMPENSATION.—

9 (A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph
10 (2), for purposes of this Act, the eligible costs
11 of providing wages and compensation shall be
12 the eligible costs of providing the wages de-
13 scribed in subparagraph (B), and the com-
14 pensation described in subparagraph (C), for el-
15 igible workers.

16 (B) WAGES.—The eligible costs described
17 in this subparagraph shall be the costs of pro-
18 viding wages at a rate that is the greatest of—

19 (i) the applicable minimum wage rate
20 under section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor
21 Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C.
22 206(a)(1)) (not counting any rate author-
23 ized for employment under special certifi-
24 cates under section 14 of such Act (29
25 U.S.C. 214));

1 (ii) the applicable State or local min-
2 imum wage rate; or

3 (iii) a rate, calculated as an amount
4 per hour, with the amount determined by
5 dividing the poverty line for a family of 4
6 by 2,080.

7 (C) COMPENSATION.—The eligible costs
8 described in this subparagraph—

9 (i) subject to clause (ii), shall be
10 nonwage expenses that are directly related
11 to compensation for eligible workers, in-
12 cluding—

13 (I) costs for employer payroll
14 taxes;

15 (II) costs for employee benefits;

16 (III) costs to provide a national
17 service education award for approved
18 national service positions sponsored
19 under section 129(i) of the National
20 and Community Service Act of 1990
21 (42 U.S.C. 12581(i)); and

22 (IV) costs of fulfilling the duties
23 described in subsection (e)(3)(E); and

24 (ii) for each eligible worker, shall not
25 exceed 20 percent of the eligible costs of

1 providing the wages described in subpara-
2 graph (B).

3 (2) LIMITATION FOR DURATION OF WAGES AND
4 COMPENSATION.—

5 (A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subpara-
6 graph (B), an eligible cost related to wages and
7 compensation for a program position is an ex-
8 pense related to the first 12 months of the pro-
9 gram position, subject to section 5(e).

10 (B) EXTENSION.—A local board may ex-
11 tend the 12-month period described in subpara-
12 graph (A) for not more than an additional 12
13 months, subject to section 5(e), to the extent
14 that such extension is necessary to cover the pe-
15 riod of a program position that is part of an
16 on-the-job training program that leads to a rec-
17 ognized postsecondary credential.

18 (3) CAREER SERVICES, SUPPORTIVE SERVICES,
19 AND TRAINING SERVICES.—

20 (A) AGGREGATE LIMIT.—The eligible costs
21 of providing, or facilitating the provision of, ca-
22 reer services, supportive services, and training
23 services to eligible workers shall, in total, not
24 exceed 20 percent of the total eligible costs of

1 providing the wages described in paragraph
2 (1)(B) to those eligible workers.

3 (B) FLEXIBILITY FOR INDIVIDUALS.—The
4 limit in subparagraph (A) shall apply to the eli-
5 gible costs for the total amount of such career
6 services, supportive services, and training serv-
7 ices provided by a jobs program to all eligible
8 workers, and shall not be construed to con-
9 stitute a separate limit on the eligible costs for
10 the career services, supportive services, and
11 training services so provided to each eligible
12 worker.

13 (C) MODIFICATION.—The requirements of
14 this paragraph may be modified under section
15 5(e).

16 (4) ADMINISTRATION.—

17 (A) LOCAL BOARDS.—The eligible costs in-
18 curred by a local board (and a State board,
19 under subparagraph (B)) of administering a
20 jobs program under this section shall not exceed
21 10 percent of the total eligible costs of pro-
22 viding the wages described in paragraph (1)(B)
23 to all eligible workers served by the jobs pro-
24 gram.

1 (B) STATE BOARDS.—A State board may
2 enter into an agreement with a local board to
3 receive a portion of the amount made available
4 under subparagraph (A) to carry out the re-
5 sponsibilities of the State board under sub-
6 section (k).

7 (C) SECRETARY.—Of the maximum
8 amount that the Secretary may make available
9 under subparagraph (A) with respect to a jobs
10 program, the Secretary may reserve not more
11 than 10 percent to administer the jobs program
12 under this section.

13 (5) MODIFICATION.—The requirements of para-
14 graphs (2), (3), and (4) may be modified under sec-
15 tion 5(e).

16 (i) EMPLOYER SHARE FOR WAGES AND COMPENSA-
17 TION.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—

19 (A) BASELINE.—Except as provided in
20 subparagraph (C), for a local board carrying
21 out a jobs program in a covered area where the
22 unemployment rate does not exceed 5 percent,
23 the employer share of the eligible costs for
24 wages and compensation shall be 33 percent.

1 (B) HIGHER UNEMPLOYMENT COVERED
2 AREAS.—Except as provided in subparagraph
3 (C), for a local board carrying out a jobs pro-
4 gram in a covered area where the unemploy-
5 ment rate exceeds 5 percent, the employer share
6 of those costs shall be the percentage (not less
7 than 0 percent) obtained by subtracting—

8 (i) 3.3 percentage points for every
9 half of a percentage point by which the un-
10 employment rate in the covered area ex-
11 ceeds 5 percent; from

12 (ii) 33 percent.

13 (C) SECOND YEAR FOR PROGRAM POSI-
14 TIONS LEADING TO RECOGNIZED POSTSEC-
15 ONDARY CREDENTIALS.—With respect to an eli-
16 gible worker who is in the second year of a pro-
17 gram position that is part of an on-the-job
18 training program, pre-apprenticeship program,
19 or registered apprenticeship program, that leads
20 to a recognized postsecondary credential, the
21 employer share of the eligible costs of wages
22 and compensation for the project shall be 50
23 percent. That employer share for such a worker
24 shall remain 50 percent regardless of any

1 change in the unemployment rate of the covered
2 area.

3 (2) RECALCULATION.—The employer share
4 under subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (1)
5 shall be recalculated for the local board once per cal-
6 endar quarter, using the unemployment rate from
7 the calendar quarter in the 12-month period pre-
8 ceding the calculation with the highest average un-
9 employment rate in the covered area.

10 (3) MODIFICATION.—The requirements of this
11 subsection may be modified under section 5(e).

12 (j) REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SECRETARY OF
13 LABOR.—The Secretary shall—

14 (1) oversee jobs programs funded under this
15 Act to ensure that program requirements are being
16 met, and verify that requests for Federal funding ac-
17 curately reflect eligible costs;

18 (2) perform random, periodic audits to deter-
19 mine compliance with this Act;

20 (3) provide payments to local boards for the eli-
21 gible costs described in subsection (h), minus any
22 employer share of the eligible costs described in sub-
23 section (i);

24 (4) evaluate the performance of jobs programs
25 carried out under this section, which may include en-

1 tering into agreements with other entities to conduct
2 such evaluations;

3 (5) establish a clearinghouse to identify and
4 publicize best practices used by local boards carrying
5 out such jobs programs this Act;

6 (6) provide technical assistance to local boards,
7 and to State boards that are providing assistance to
8 local boards, carrying out such jobs programs under
9 this Act;

10 (7) conduct outreach to State boards, local
11 boards, employers, and eligible workers to maximize
12 opportunities for participation in jobs programs by
13 eligible workers, in furtherance of the purpose of
14 this Act as described in section 2, by providing job
15 opportunities for as many eligible workers as pos-
16 sible; and

17 (8) administer this Act in consultation with the
18 Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Housing
19 and Urban Development, the Secretary of Health
20 and Human Services, the Attorney General, and the
21 Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

22 (k) **ROLE OF STATE BOARDS.**—In order to assist
23 local boards in carrying out programs under this Act, a
24 State board may—

1 (1) work with local boards to develop statewide
2 strategies to implement programs under this Act;

3 (2) align programs carried out under this Act
4 with the plan submitted by the State board under
5 subtitle A of title I of the Workforce Innovation and
6 Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3111 et seq.);

7 (3) facilitate coordination of programs carried
8 out under this Act with the activities carried out
9 under—

10 (A) the employment and training program
11 established by the corresponding State under
12 the supplemental nutrition assistance program
13 established under the Food and Nutrition Act
14 of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.);

15 (B) the corresponding State program for
16 temporary assistance for needy families estab-
17 lished under part A of title IV of the Social Se-
18 curity Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.);

19 (C) the national service plan submitted by
20 the corresponding State Commission on Na-
21 tional and Community Service under section
22 178 of the National and Community Service
23 Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12638); and

24 (D) the corresponding State plan for ca-
25 reer and technical education under part B of

1 title I of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Tech-
2 nical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2341
3 et seq.);

4 (4) assist local boards in the process of submit-
5 ting applications under this Act; and

6 (5) provide technical assistance to local boards
7 and employers participating in programs under this
8 Act.

9 (l) PAYMENT.—

10 (1) ADVANCE PAYMENT.—The Secretary may
11 provide a payment under this Act, as described in
12 subsection (a), for a quarter on the basis of an ad-
13 vance estimate of expenditures submitted by the
14 local board and any other investigation the Secretary
15 may find necessary.

16 (2) RETROSPECTIVE ADJUSTMENT.—The Sec-
17 retary may reduce or increase a payment referred to
18 in paragraph (1) for a quarter as necessary to ad-
19 just for any overpayment or underpayment resulting
20 from such a payment in a previous quarter.

21 (3) REIMBURSEMENT.—The Secretary may pro-
22 vide a reimbursement payment under this Act, as
23 described in subsection (a), for a quarter on the
24 basis of the actual expenditures of the local board,

1 if payment has not already been made under this
2 subsection for the same expenditure.

3 (m) MANDATORY FUNDING.—For the purpose of car-
4 rying out this section, there is authorized to be appro-
5 priated and there is appropriated, out of any money in
6 the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, such sums as
7 may be necessary for fiscal year 2026 and each subsequent
8 fiscal year.

9 **SEC. 5. GRANTS FOR HIGH-POVERTY AREAS AND AREAS**
10 **WITH CHRONICALLY LOW EMPLOYMENT**
11 **RATES.**

12 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

13 (1) HIGH-POVERTY AREA.—The term “high-
14 poverty area” means an area in which the poverty
15 rate, as determined by the Bureau of the Census,
16 has been not less than 20 percent for a period of not
17 less than 3 years.

18 (2) PRIME WORKING-AGE EMPLOYMENT-TO-
19 POPULATION RATION.—The term “prime working-
20 age employment-to-population ratio”, used with re-
21 spect to an area, means the ratio of the number of
22 individuals age 25 through 54 in the area who are
23 employed, to the number of individuals age 25
24 through 54 in the area.

1 (b) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall award
2 grants on a competitive basis to local boards (including
3 community-based organizations, consistent with section
4 4(d)(4)(D)), that carry out jobs programs described in
5 section 4, to provide for added costs related to carrying
6 out the programs with modified standards specified in sub-
7 section (e), with the purpose of achieving economic devel-
8 opment and job growth through the programs. The Sec-
9 retary shall award the grants for periods of 4 years, and
10 pay such grants as provided under section 4(l).

11 (c) APPLICATION.—To be eligible to receive a grant
12 under this section, a local board shall submit an applica-
13 tion to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and
14 containing such information as the Secretary may require,
15 including—

16 (1) a plan for the jobs program involved to
17 achieve performance accountability measures de-
18 scribed in section 4(c) through modified standards
19 described in subsection (e), and sustain that achieve-
20 ment in the long term without permanent support
21 from a grant awarded under this section;

22 (2) information that demonstrates stakeholder
23 engagement in the jobs program from the public and
24 private sectors, especially major institutions such as
25 institutions of higher education, hospitals, or other

1 large employers and organizations, that are located
2 in the covered area; and

3 (3) a plan to ensure that residents of the cov-
4 ered area are part of the operation of and benefit
5 from the results of the jobs program, which may in-
6 clude a plan to expand worker-owned enterprises, ex-
7 pand small local businesses, support start-up busi-
8 nesses owned by covered area residents, or give cov-
9 ered area residents a role in carrying out the jobs
10 program.

11 (d) PRIORITY.—In selecting a local board to receive
12 a grant under this section, the Secretary shall give priority
13 to local boards proposing to serve—

14 (1) high-poverty areas; or

15 (2) areas for which the prime working-age em-
16 ployment-to-population ratio has been low, relative
17 to that ratio for the United States, for a period of
18 not less than 3 years.

19 (e) MODIFICATION OF CERTAIN STANDARDS.—In
20 awarding a grant under this section to a local board, the
21 Secretary is authorized to modify 1 or more of the fol-
22 lowing standards for the program carried out by the local
23 board, if the Secretary determines that making such a
24 modification can be reasonably expected to help the pro-

1 gram achieve the performance accountability measures re-
2 ferred to in subsection (c)(1):

3 (1) The periods of time specified in subpara-
4 graphs (C) and (D) of section 3(3).

5 (2) The limitation on the percentage or number
6 of employees in program positions with a single par-
7 ticipating employer, as specified in section 4(f)(4).

8 (3) The allowable duration of funding for wages
9 and compensation as eligible costs, for a program
10 position, as specified in section 4(h)(2).

11 (4) The limitation on eligible costs for career
12 services, supportive services, and training services,
13 as specified in section 4(h)(3).

14 (5) The limitation on eligible costs for adminis-
15 tration, as specified in section 4(h)(4).

16 (6) The employer share of eligible costs for
17 wages and compensation, as specified in section 4(i).

18 (f) EVALUATIONS.—The Secretary shall—

19 (1) evaluate the performance of jobs programs
20 that receive funding under this section, which may
21 include entering into agreements with other entities
22 to conduct such evaluations; and

23 (2) identify and publicize best practices used by
24 local boards carrying out jobs programs that receive

1 funding under this section, through the clearing-
2 house described in section 4(j)(5).

3 (g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
4 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
5 such sums as may be necessary for fiscal year 2027 and
6 each subsequent fiscal year.