Introduction
Workforce development, traditionally addressed by federal and local government, has become a priority issue for state legislatures across the nation. With concerns about unemployment, the inability of employers to find qualified workers and recovery from the Great Recession in mind, legislators are working diligently to enact meaningful workforce development measures.

Today, workforce development is centered on how to efficiently train workers for relevant and in-demand jobs and several stakeholders are involved in the conversation. This often includes business, education, labor and government agencies working together to determine how to increase the pool of qualified American workers.

Enactments on workforce development during 2015 covered a variety of topics. Some of the most common themes among enacted legislation included measures that:

- Respond to industry demand.
- Invest in efforts to employ specific populations such as veterans, people with disabilities, foster youth, individuals with limited education and people with criminal backgrounds.
- Apply tax credits and other business incentives for workforce development.
- Invest in dual enrollment programs for students to complete high school and take college courses simultaneously.
- Increase experiential learning opportunities to gain relevant skills while on the job.
- Increase transparency and coordination among government agencies.

Read on to learn more about enacted legislation related to these themes.

Overview of Legislation
Industry Demand as a Driver of Workforce Development
States are investing in high-need industries and listening to businesses to make workforce development decisions that drive training and future employment where it is needed most. Alabama created an independent community college system to ensure that programs of study are responsive to industry needs. New Hampshire took similar steps by changing requirements of regional career and technical education center programs. Vermont legislators addressed industry need by extending an in-state student loan forgiveness program to students that work in occupations considered critical in the state.

Employing Individuals of Particular Populations
Legislation in 2015 also illustrated state efforts to help various people access relevant training and find jobs. This includes veterans, people with disabilities, foster care youth, people with limited education and/or English language skills, individuals attending tribally controlled community colleges and people with criminal backgrounds.

- Veteran Initiatives
  Ten states—Arizona, Florida, Illinois, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Washington, Wisconsin and Wyoming—extended in-state tuition benefits for a variety of higher education programs to veterans and
often, their spouses and children. Twelve states—Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota and Utah—also passed legislation that allows employers to establish hiring and promotion preference policies for veterans. Other states focused on veterans by boosting services and developing targeted programs. Colorado created the Employment Services for Veterans Pilot Program to provide follow-along employment services for up to 20 veterans. Louisiana authorized reverse transfer agreements to award educational credits to veterans more easily and will also require all public postsecondary institution to provide additional services to veterans and their spouses to help them achieve educational goals more quickly.

- **People with Disabilities**
  Oklahoma created the Employment First Act to require coordination among state agencies to hire individuals with disabilities.

- **Foster Youth**
  Alabama established a scholarship program to provide foster care youth with tuition support for job training and skill certification courses at any publicly funded college or training program. Illinois authorized the development of a summer internship pilot program to provide foster youth with professional training and experience.

- **Limited Education and Skill Initiatives**
  California will conduct a mandated review of the state’s postsecondary entrance examinations to determine if the assessments being used are appropriate for individuals without a high school diploma and/or limited English language skills. Adjustments to these assessments will be required if deemed necessary by the study committee.

- **Individuals with Criminal Backgrounds**
  Maryland is requiring its Correctional Educational Council to develop and recommend education and workforce training programs in correctional institutions to expand access to training for adults in the criminal justice system.

- **Native American Populations**
  North Dakota expanded a workforce development grant program for tribally controlled community colleges to allow funds to enhance programs that provide certificates or degrees for high demand jobs. Previously, funds could only be used to create rather than expand programs.

- Minnesota increased its investment in workforce programs for a number of “underserved” populations including high risk youth, dislocated and underemployed adults and people living with disabilities and mental illness by $9 million.

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**Tax Credits and Business Incentives**
Tax credits and other incentives for local innovation and training can encourage the development of workforce opportunities. Colorado created the “Innovative Industries Workforce Development” program to reimburse small businesses in innovative industries up to half of the expenses they spend on providing internships. Colorado will also allow counties to establish a workforce development program known as “Bright Future Colorado” to provide financial assistance to county residents for postsecondary education and training—under this program, counties are allowed to offer tax credits or rebates to property owners that contribute to the fund. Mississippi will offer a tax credit to employers that hire honorably discharged veterans that have served on or after Sept. 11, 2001. Montana created a private sector business training program to provide grants to new or innovative businesses that supply skill based training for new employees.

**Dual Enrollment Efforts**
Dual enrollment—also known as concurrent enrollment—allows students to be enrolled in two educational institutions at the same time. This typically refers to a high school student taking courses at a postsecondary institution to earn both
high school and postsecondary credit. Georgia expanded its “Move on When Ready Act” to be offered to all high school students, beginning in the ninth grade. Georgia will also allow high school diplomas to be awarded to students that previously dropped out but are now completing coursework at a postsecondary institution. Hawaii expanded its Dual Credit Program, a partnership with the University of Hawaii, to include all high school students in grades 9-12 as well as home-schooled students. Maine expanded its “Competitive Skills Scholarship Program” to include students under the age of 18 if they are enrolled as both a high school student and in a career and technical education program. South Dakota will allow high school students to apply to higher education institutions to receive dual credit and will extend this opportunity to students enrolled in nonpublic or tribal schools.

Experiential Learning Opportunities
Experiential learning opportunities allow students to gain hands-on skills while in school to expand their abilities, gain experience and connect more closely with employers. Many states considered the value of these opportunities in 2015. Connecticut created a task force to develop a pilot “earn and learn” program, which will allow students at three institutions of higher education to engage in applied, work-based learning while also earning money to pay for their higher education. Michigan appropriated $500,000 per year over the course of three years for a pilot program that connects adult education participants directly with employers by linking adult education, career and technical skills and workforce development. The program staff is required to produce an annual report detailing participant progress. New Mexico will require school districts to offer career and technical education courses as electives for meeting high school graduation requirements so students gain hands-on skills prior to graduation.

Increasing Transparency and Coordination
Making students more aware of the job opportunities and training requirements related to various programs of study and occupations was also a theme in 2015. Arkansas will require its Department of Workforce Services to prepare an economic security report of employment and earning outcomes for degrees and certificates earned at all state-supported higher education institutions. This report must include information about average earnings, student loan debt and employment data and be made available to the public and students at state-supported institutions before the student registers for classes. Hawaii will require the University of Hawaii to develop a Graduation Pathway System to increase the rate of on-time graduation. The purpose is to direct students toward appropriate options to complete their studies, graduate in reasonable time frames and understand the local employment market. North Dakota will require postsecondary schools to notify students about program compliance with state board licensing requirements.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Considerations
Passage of the 2014 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) prompted a number of enactments across the states. Most legislation related to WIOA dealt with state governance related to workforce boards, appropriating funds and agency and program reorganization. More information about WIOA specific enactments can be found in our database of WIOA legislation as well as our 2015 report: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Implementation: 2015 State Legislation.

Organization of Enactments
2015 workforce development enactments are organized by state. Please scroll through the various tabs below to take a look at the various actions states are taking to address workforce development.

2015 Enacted Legislation
Alabama

AL H 554: Creates the Department of Commerce and transfers all duties and functions of the Department of Economic and Community Affairs and the Department of Postsecondary Education to the new department. The Department of Commerce is comprised of the Business Development Division and the Workforce Development Division. All workforce programs and development boards are transferred to the Workforce Development Division. Maintains the Alabama Workforce Council under the new department and defines its duties and membership to
include the governor, two members of the Legislature and one member from a regional workforce council. Establishes no fewer than six and no more than 10 Regional Workforce Development Councils to oversee workforce issues and annually submit a workforce development plan. Creates the Legislative Oversight Commission comprised of four members from each legislative chamber to evaluate performance and recommend relevant legislation.

**AL S 157**: Establishes the Fostering Hope Scholarship program to provide tuition for high school graduates, or persons with a GED up to age 26, who are currently or formerly in the foster care system, including children adopted from the program at 14 or older. Scholarships can go towards any job training courses and skill certification courses offered at a public college or university or a publicly funded training program.

**AL S 170**: Establishes the Craft Training Board and creates the Craft Training Program within the Alabama Building Commission. Establishes a fee of $1 per every $1,000 dollars of nonresidential permitted construction to pay for the program, which will enhance training, education and workforce in the construction industry.

**AL S 191**: Creates an independent Alabama community college system to replace the Department of Postsecondary Education. Establishes the Board of Trustees and the Chancellor of the Alabama Community College System to govern all aspects of technical and career colleges in the state to ensure that these programs are responsive to industry needs.

**Alaska**

**AK H 46**: Establishes the Alaska Workforce Investment Board with membership from multiple agencies, businesses and industries as well as one Alaska Native, a veteran and person with a disability.

**Arizona**

**AZ H 2066**: Expands the use of the Public School Tax Credit to include standardized testing fees for college credit or readiness and technical industry certification assessments.

**AZ H 2091**: Allows for in-state tuition for military veterans and spouses of veterans who have lived in the state for at least 12 months.

**AZ H 2414**: Establishes a study committee on community college finance and expenditure limits and requires the committee to review the impact of expenditure limits on financing modern and competitive workforce programs.

**AZ H 2478**: Permits a joint technical education district to contract with charter schools to offer career and technical education courses or programs as a satellite campus.

**Arkansas**

**AR H 1103**: Defines federal and state appropriations for the Department of Workforce Services for 2015-2016 and establishes funds for workforce development grants.

**AR H 1851**: Amends the appointed members to the Workforce Investment Board to comply with WIOA. Membership includes representatives of public agencies and the private sector, two chief elected officers appointed by the governor and two members from youth organizations and programs.

**AR S 154**: Establishes Adult Education Charter Schools in the state. Details application and evaluation requirements for programs to receive the charter school status including that the curriculum must culminate in a high school diploma and an industry certification.

**AR S 211**: Requires the Department of Workforce Services to prepare an economic security report of employment and earning outcomes for degrees and certificates earned at all state-supported institutions of higher education. This report must include information about average earnings, student loan debt and employment data for varying programs of
study. Also requires that this report is made available to the public and provided to students enrolling in state-supported institutions of higher education before the student registers for classes.

**AR S 212:** Establishes the Reengagement System and Differentiated Pathway to a High School Diploma Program to provide students age 16-21 years of age with the necessary supports to progress towards a high school diploma and workforce readiness skills. Defines partners in this program including school districts, state institutions of higher education, career education organizations and other community-based organizations.

**AR S 368:** Creates the Career Education and Workforce Development board and specifies membership from business and government to develop a state plan for vocational-education. Creates the Office of Skills development and specifies members and duties. Requires the coordination and dissemination of information about state employment opportunities and other relevant labor market information via the department’s website.

**AR S 500:** Continues an appropriation of $300,000 to the Department of Workforce Services to provide job counseling and workforce readiness training to veterans and other “employment challenged persons.”

**AR S 557:** Allocates funds to the Department of Career Education’s Skills Development Fund for general operating and grants allocated for comprehensive statewide workforce development programs.

**AR S 791:** Repeals the TANF Oversight Board and establishes the Committee of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board. Requires the governor to designate local workforce development areas and local workforce development boards and specifies membership to include representatives from state agencies and the private sector. Specifies duties and responsibilities in compliance with WIOA, including an emphasis on one-stop partner programs, career pathways and the submission of comprehensive state and local workforce plans.

**AR S 891:** Establishes the Workforce Initiative Act which requires workforce training and collaboration among institutions and organizations on regional sector strategies across the state. Requires that funding for the Workforce Initiative Act is allocated by the Department of Higher Education. Sets guidelines for education and training grants.

**AR S 995:** Requires the Department of Workforce Services to meet with various professional boards in the state to identify geographical areas that are underserved by critical professions, assess the need for professionals to reside in these areas, explore strategies to encourage professionals to reside in specified areas and make recommendations of administrative and legislative action to achieve these goals. Requires a report by Nov. 15, 2016.

**California**

**CA A 93:** Budget Act of 2015—Designates federal and state funding for programs to comply with WIOA. These programs include career pathways, adult education and rehabilitation services.

**CA A 104:** Education Finance: Education Omnibus Trailer Bill—Establishes the California Career Technical and Education Incentive Grant Program and the Adult Education Block Grant Program to comply with WIOA. Provides grants for youth and adult workforce development programs.

**CA A 288:** Authorizes the governing boards of community colleges to enter into partnerships with the governing boards of school districts to develop pathways from high school to community college. Specifies that these partnerships are intended to lead to career technical education, preparation for transfer to another higher education institution, improving high school graduation rates or achieving college and career readiness.

**CA A 731:** Requires the state’s workforce board to assist the governor in developing the state workforce investment plan, guidelines for the continuous improvement and operation of the workforce system and continued development of local workforce investment areas in the state.
CA A 752: Requires the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education to review entrance examinations for students without a high school diploma or its equivalent and/or students with limited English language skills to determine adequacy to assess student skills. Requires the bureau to complete this review by July 1, 2016 and approve an alternate examination if the current one is not appropriate.

CA A 1093: Revises the criteria for the existing Supervised Population Workforce Training Grant program by authorizing a grant applicant to address the education and training needs of people who require basic education, have some postsecondary education, or are in both categories. Requires the Workforce Investment Board to submit a report to the Legislature by January 2018 that evaluates the overall success and effectiveness of the program.

CA A 1270: Updates existing workforce boards to comply with WIOA. Specifies membership to include business, agencies, the governor and two legislators. Emphasizes the use of metrics to understand the collective impact that investments make on the state labor market. Renames and revises the membership and role of the California Investment Board to the California Workforce Development Board to assist in the development of a comprehensive workforce state plan. Renames and revises the guidelines for local workforce development boards across the state. Requires local boards to submit a plan to the governor. Encourages local boards to establish a standing committee on the provision of youth services.

CA A 1514: Amends existing law regarding the disbursement of unemployment benefits for people participating in workforce training to include federal funding and expectations required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Extends benefits to people involved in a union or trade association, participants in employer sponsored training and people participating in a state or federal apprenticeship program.

CA S 42: (Note: Governor’s veto message): Establishes an Office of Higher Education Performance and Accountability to assist and guide the legislature and governor on higher education priorities. Also details membership and duties of the office.

CA S 342: Requires the Workforce Investment Board to help people with economic, physical or other barriers to employment attain marketable skills. Defines the term “earn and learn.”

CA HR 7: Recognizes the week of March 22-28, 2015, as Adult Education Week to honor the work of students, teachers and administrators of adult education programs statewide for their efforts.

Colorado
CO H 1030: Requires the Department of Labor to administer the Employment Services for Veterans Pilot Program to provide follow-along services to up to 20 eligible veterans. Services include job retention, mediation, mentoring and career advancement. The program will be operated by an in-state nonprofit agency selected by the departments. A report on measurable outcomes is required.

CO H 1170: Appropriates funds and indicates measures to raise the level of postsecondary and workforce readiness that high school students demonstrates upon graduation. Creates the position of a postsecondary and workforce readiness coordinator and specifies duties.

CO H 1230: Creates the Innovative Industries Workforce Development program in the Department of Labor and Employment to reimburse small business in innovative industries up to half of the expenses related to qualifying internships.
CO H 1270: Allows the creation of P-Tech Schools (Pathways in Technology) to be operated collaboratively by a local education provider, a community college and one or more local high-growth industry employers. Defines P-Tech for grades 9-14. Allows P-tech students to earn pre-apprenticeship certificates.

CO H 1271: Allows money for the Industry Training Program to fund mobile learning labs, which provide employers with a flexible delivery option for on-site job training.

CO H 1274: Directs the Workforce Development Council to design integrated career pathways for students within industry sectors and requires collaboration between government agencies and the private sector. Requires that new career pathways disseminate information via CollegeinColorado.org, a free online resource site.

CO H 1275: Allows local education providers to include course work related to apprenticeship programs and internship programs in concurrent enrollment programs. The Concurrent Enrollment Advisory Board will create recommendations to advise and assist local education providers in creating such agreements. Establishes a tuition assistance program for students enrolled in career and technical education certificate programs that do not meet minimum Pell Grant credit hour requirements.

CO H 1276: Establishes the Skilled Worker Outreach, Recruitment and Key Training Program, also referred to as the “Work Grant Program,” to provide job training. Specifies a grant process—including a 13-member grant review committee—eligible program applicants and measurable outcomes to be included in a required report. Establishes a program fund referred to as the “work fund.”

CO S 82: Allows counties to establish a workforce development program known as “Bright Future Colorado.” Specifies that programs will provide financial assistance to county residents for post-secondary education and training. Counties may establish a companion fund and offer property tax credits or rebates to property owners who contribute to the fund.

CO S 239: Transfers all vocational rehabilitation programs from the Department of Human Services to the Department of Labor and Employment.

Connecticut

CT H 6959: Creates a task force to develop a pilot Earn and Learn CT program to be established at three institutions of higher education in the state with a number of goals including: 1) Providing students attending institutions of higher education with opportunities to engage in applied, work-based learning while earning money to pay for higher education. 2) Establishing incentives for institutions of higher education to develop the curricula, faculty incentives and support structures to implement work-based learning. 3) Encouraging employers in the state to foster existing work-based learning experiences and provide additional work-based learning opportunities. 4) Identifying ways in which work-based learning is fiscally viable for institutions of higher education and employers in the state. Outlines members required of the task force and requires a report.

Delaware

DE S 112: Directs the Director of the Delaware Economic Development Office to develop a five-year comprehensive state plan for economic development that includes strategies for talent development including education and training opportunities as well as available workforce. The first report is due in 2015 and subsequent reports are due every five years. Specifies other information to be included in the report and entities to whom the report should be submitted.

Florida

FL H 7019: Renames and transfers the duties of Workforce Florida Inc. to CareerSource Florida Inc. Creates a task force to advise the state on preparation for the implementation of WIOA. Requires the task force to submit
recommendations for a state plan to CareerSource Florida Inc. and specifies that the task force will be abolished after recommendations are submitted.

**FL S 7028**: Revises criteria for veterans regarding out-of-state waivers at state universities, Florida College System institutions and certain career centers to expand educational access for veterans.

**Georgia**

**GA H 348**: Establishes the Workforce Division to replace the Governor’s Office of Workforce Development within the Department of Economic Development. Creates the Workforce Development Board with responsibilities compliant with WIOA. Membership to be decided by the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the House of Representatives and the governor.

**GA H 443**: Permits employers to create and implement policies that give preferential treatment to veterans in hiring, promotion and retention efforts.

**GA S 2**: Allows high school diplomas to be awarded to students that complete coursework at a postsecondary institution and meet certain requirements. Requires the State Board of the Technical College System to annually identify fields of study in which there is a critical need of employees. Requires that information be provided to local schools for the purpose of emphasizing workforce needs to students and supporting career pathways decisions.

**GA S 132**: Expands the Move on When Ready Act which allows 11th and 12th grade students to take courses at postsecondary institutions for dual credit to also be offered to ninth and 10th grade students. Requires that information about this opportunity is given to students during their eighth grade year. Specifies operating agreements for high schools and higher education institutions to participate in the program. Requires the State Board of Education, in consultation with the State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia and the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, to determine appropriate courses.

**Hawaii**

**HI H 547**: Requires the University of Hawaii to develop a Graduation Pathway System to increase the rate of on-time graduation and appropriates funds. The purpose is to direct students toward appropriate options to complete their studies, graduate within a reasonable time and understand the dynamics of the local employment market.

**HI H 696**: Permits the director of labor and industrial relations to develop needed workforce advisory boards in the state. Outlines membership and duty requirements of any potential advisory boards.

**HI S 374**: Renames the Running Start Program as the Dual Credit Program and expands participation to include ninth and 10th grade students—in addition to 11th and 12th grade students—as well as both public and home-schooled students. The Dual Credit Program allows high school students to earn both high school and college credit by taking courses at the University of Hawaii.

**Idaho**

**ID H 302**: Creates the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Action Center and board in the office of the governor. Specifies duties to include agency coordination, professional development for educators, research and development and engaging the private sector in STEM activities. Requires the director to track and compare progress and growth of STEM students. Requires an annual report to the legislature, governor and state board of education.

**ID H 326**: Appropriates $647,000 for the STEM Action Center.

**ID S 1012**: Appropriates $555,000 for the Vocational Rehabilitation Program.
ID S 1192: Transfers funds to the Workforce Development Training Fund. Requires a report to the legislature on fund activities. Appropriates funds for the Department of Labor.

Illinois
IL H 1490: Creates the Commission on Young Adult Employment to address issues concerning the readiness and ability of young adults to find jobs post-higher education. Requires recommendations to improve employment opportunities.

IL H 3122: Authorizes private employers to implement voluntary veteran hiring preferences and defines criteria to qualify for preferential hiring.

IL H 3692: Allows a person using benefits under the federal All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program to be deemed an Illinois resident for tuition purposes at public universities and community colleges.

IL HR 477: Encourages agencies participating in the Illinois Pathways Interagency Committee to establish advisory committees to analyze and recommend methods to better prepare high school graduates for postsecondary education and the workforce.

IL S 1255: Authorizes the development and implementation of a foster youth summer internship pilot program. The program is intended to provide current or former foster youth with professional training and experience. The program will run for two years across multiple regions in the state and then be evaluated to determine if it will be continued.

IL S 1445: Requires the State Board of Education to administer a college and career ready determination which can be accepted by public institutions of higher education for application and admission purposes.

Indiana
IN H 1601: Amends and redefines the role of the Department of Workforce Development and the State Workforce Innovation Council in compliance with WIOA. Tasks the Council with developing a program to administer grants to minority students for workforce development. Creates a program to track graduates of colleges and universities located in the state and provide them with information on job opportunities in Indiana.

IN S 298: Authorizes private employers in the state to establish a veterans’ preference employment policy and outlines guidelines to establish such a policy.

Iowa
IA H 205: Extends law that requires community colleges, accredited private postsecondary institutions and the Board of regents to file annual reports that detail the award of educational credits to veterans for military education, training and experience to include members of the Reserve Forces and the National Guard.

IA H 658: Amends eligibility requirements for the Gap Tuition Assistance Program so that applicants must only demonstrate financial need for six months prior to application. Expands eligibility to also include applicants earning at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty income limit which had previously been limited to applicants earning at or below 250 percent. The Gap Tuition Assistance Program provides need-based funding tuition assistance to applicants pursuing continuing education in certificate training programs for in-demand occupations.

Kansas
HB 2154: Allows private employers to adopt a preference of hiring qualified veterans and provides employer reinstatement protections. Provides in-state tuition to certain military personnel and their family members and modifies professional credentialing and licensing requirements for military service members and their spouses. Extends this protection to both honorably and less than honorably dismissed veterans.
**Kentucky**

**KY H 164**: Allows private employers to establish a voluntary veterans’ preference employment policy and provides guidelines.

**KY HR 107** and **KY SR 96**: Recognizes February as Career and Technical Education Month.

**KY HCR 87**: Recognizes the General Assembly’s “Putting Veterans to Work Initiative” and resulting legislation that has contributed to employment opportunities for veterans.

**Louisiana**

**LA H 741**: Creates the Louisiana Workforce Investment Council and specifies its duties and membership to comply with WIOA. Includes the submission of a state plan for workforce development. Requires that of the council members who represent business and industry, one must be female and two must represent minority owned businesses. The council must recommend designated workforce development areas, and these areas must appoint local workforce development boards. Specifies membership and duties.

**LA H 838**: Limits the TOPS-Tech Award, a program of merit scholarships for eligible graduating high school students attending certain postsecondary education institutions, to students who are enrolled in associate degree or shorter-term training and education programs that align with state workforce priorities. Priorities will be determined by the Board of Regents and the Louisiana Workforce Investment Council.

**LA S 132**: Makes changes to further support the transfer of credits as well as the education of veterans and their spouses in the state. Authorizes and encourages four-year colleges and universities and community colleges in the state to enter into reverse transfer agreements. Requires the Statewide Articulation and Transfer Council in the state to establish guidelines for the transfer of these credits. Requires public postsecondary institutions to assist veterans and their spouses in achieving educational goals for workforce participation by providing expedited transcript analysis, prior learning assessment, portfolio analysis, advising and testing. Requires institutions, upon request, to evaluate any transcript of a veteran or veteran’s spouse and accept appropriate credit transfer from other regionally accredited institutions. Requires the Statewide Articulation and Transfer Council to coordinate and oversee the development of a military specific articulation and transfer process that recognizes and aligns military education, training and experience with career and workforce goals. Requires a report.

**Maine**

**ME LD 856**: Expands the Competitive Skills Scholarship Program to include students under the age of 18 if they are enrolled as a full-time student at a high school and also enrolled in a career and technical education program. Directs the Commissioner of Labor to transfer funds from the Competitive Skills Scholarship Fund to cover postsecondary expenses for high school students that are completing dual enrollment in a career and technical education program. Names this initiative as the “Bridge Year Program.”

**Maryland**

**MD H 942**: Establishes “Apprenticeship Maryland,” a two-year pilot program to prepare students to enter the workforce by providing on-site employment training and related classroom instruction needed to obtain a license or certification for a skilled occupation. Sets criteria for participation and requires an evaluation of program effectiveness.

**MD H 1244**: Changes the name of the Education and Workforce Training Coordinating Council for Correctional Institutions to the Correctional Education Council. Requires the Council to develop and recommend educational and workforce training programs, promote the interests of educational programs and workforce skills training in correctional institutions and conduct regular program review.
**Massachusetts**

**MA H 3650**: Requires representatives to be appointed to one stop career centers in each region to facilitate career and job training services and ensure compliance with WIOA.

**MA H 3772**: Establishes a state workforce development board.

**Michigan**

**MI H 4115**: Appropriates additional funds for workforce development programs including a pre-college engineering K-12 program that is focused on exposing, preparing and motivating groups who are underrepresented in STEM related technical professions and careers. Sets criteria for collaboration with the talent district council and an advisory council to develop a regional strategy that aligns adult education programs and services with special consideration for career pathways.

**MI S 69**: Extends the timeline for community colleges and businesses to form partnerships under the Michigan New Jobs Training Program to train students for specific job skills needed by employers.

**MI S 133**: Appropriates funds for the Talent Investment Agency. Defines fiscal and programmatic expectations.

**MI S 134**: Appropriates $500,000 per year over three years for a pilot program that connects adult education participants directly with employers by linking adult education, career and technical skills and workforce development. Requires an annual report detailing participant progress in terms of workforce development and employment.

**Minnesota**

**MN H 3.a**: Increases annual appropriations for workforce development by $9 million for 2016 for programs that target underserved populations such as high risk youth, dislocated and underemployed adults and people living with disabilities and mental illness.

**MN S 5**: Requires postsecondary institutions to conduct a survey related to concurrent enrollment. Requires postsecondary institutions offering courses taught by a secondary teacher to establish a concurrent enrollment advisory board. Board duties include providing strategic advice, recommending and reviewing proposals for course offerings, serving as a coordinating entity between secondary and postsecondary institutions and increasing the understanding and collaboration among concurrent enrollment partners, stakeholders, the legislature and the public.

**Mississippi**

**MS H 33**: Offers a tax credit to employers that hire an honorably discharged veteran that served in the Armed Forces of the United States on or after Sept. 11, 2001. Specifies limits on the tax credit and other qualifying criteria to claim the credit.

**Missouri**

No bills identified at this time.

**Montana**

**MT H 356**: Requires that state appropriations to school districts for secondary K-12 career and vocational education programs be used for expansion of programs and services and not to reduce district spending on such programs.

**MT S 163**: Creates and specifies the terms and expectations of the private sector business training program, which provides grants to new or innovative business for skill based training for employees in new jobs.
Nebraska
NE LB 334: Repeals the state’s Workforce Investment Board to comply with WIOA. (Note: Statement of intent).

NE LB 382: Creates and funds the High School Equivalency Grant Fund by transferring funds from the Job Training Cash Fund.

NE LB 519: Establishes the Community College Gap Assistance Program to provide funding for community colleges to award assistance to students in eligible programs. Defines eligible program as those aligned with training programs and stackable credentials.

Nevada
NV A 89: Authorizes private employers to adopt an employment policy that gives preference to hiring veterans and their spouses.

NV A 485: Revises the duties of the director of the Office of Science Innovation and Technology and modifies the membership and requirements of the Advisory Council of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. Makes the advisory council permanent.

NV S 515: Appropriates $10,443,822 in fiscal year 2015-2016 and $12,543,822 in fiscal year 2016-2017 for career and technical education grants to support dual enrollment for high school students and to create a competitive science, technology, engineering and mathematics grant program for middle and high school students.

New Hampshire
NH S 55: Establishes the “Veterans’ Preference Employment Policy” which allows private employers to give preference in hiring and promotions to veterans in the state.

NH S 190: Modifies the terms and expectations of career and technical education center programs by requiring that centers are broad enough to service business and industry needs of the area and provide substantial training offerings. Focuses on the importance of regional centers and provides for guidelines for acceptance to programs and the cost to students, the state and the center.

New Jersey
NJ S 215: Allows counties and municipalities whose hiring preferences are not regulated by civil service rules to provide hiring preferences to veterans in the state. Outlines guidelines to establish a hiring preference.

New Mexico
NM H 178: Require school districts to offer career technical education courses as electives for meeting high school graduation requirements.

NM H 427: Allows the spouse and/or child of a veteran to pay in-state tuition and fees.

NM SM 105 (Note: Vetoed by the governor): Calls for collaboration between higher education, public education and the workforce solutions department to create career pathways for students and close the gap between career pathway programs and workforce opportunities.

New York
NY S 2000: Requires the state’s workforce investment board to assist the governor in developing workforce programs and identifying workforce development activities to be funded with state funds. Allocates funding for the administration and operation of employment and training programs in compliance with WIOA.
NY A 3003: Appropriates more than $20 million in federal funds for various WIOA grants and programs.

**North Carolina**

NC S 545: Requires various occupational licensing boards to issue licenses, certifications, or registrations to military-trained applicants to increase the state’s available workforce. Specifies that military-trained applicants may take examinations or other proficiency tests specific to the veteran population in lieu of standard requirements for the occupations.

**North Dakota**

ND H 1003: Requires the state board of higher education to establish and maintain a unified system to offer workforce training, vocational education and technical education and to review and revise programs based on the workforce needs of the state. Requires the board of higher education to establish a workforce education advisory council. Specifies membership and responsibilities.

ND H 1018: Requires the division of workforce development to administer a program to increase the use of internships, apprenticeships and work experience opportunities for higher education students, high school students and educators that focus on target industries in which employment is needed. Provides services to employers, communities and business organizations.

ND H 1045: Requires any postsecondary school to notify prospective and current students of the status of any program that results in professional registration and/or licensing’s compliance with the state board’s licensing requirements.

ND H 1129: Expands the workforce development grant program for tribally controlled community colleges to be used to enhance programs that provide certificates or degrees for high demand jobs.

ND H 1131: Establishes a hiring preference for veterans in the state.

**Ohio**

OH H 64: Directs a number of changes to workforce development efforts. Requires the Department of Jobs and Family services to administer WIOA. Requires recipients of vocational rehabilitation services to create an account with OhioMeansJobs to facilitate job seeking opportunities. Permits high school students who are pursuing a career-technical instructional track to take relevant career-based mathematics courses in place of standardized courses. Requires the Department of Education to calculate a state payment for each student enrolled in approved career pathway programs. Requires the board of trustees of each state institution of higher education to adopt and implement a policy to grant undergraduate course credit to a student who has successfully completed an international baccalaureate diploma program.

**Oklahoma**

OK H 1969: Creates the Oklahoma Employment First Act which requires all state agencies to coordinate efforts to hire individuals with disabilities. Requires agencies to ensure that state programs, policies, procedures and funding support the hiring of individuals with disabilities. Directs agencies to share all relevant data and information to ensure progress.

OK S 138: Amends current law to extend in-state tuition eligibility to military personnel and any dependents including spouses and children. Details criteria to qualify for in-state tuition eligibility.

OK S 195: Creates the Voluntary Veterans’ Preference Employment Policy Act which allows private employers to institute hiring preference for veterans. Outlines guidelines for implementing such a policy and directs the Department of Veterans Affairs to assist in determining the eligibility status of veterans.
**OK S 612**: Modifies membership and duties of the Governor’s Council for Workforce and Economic Development and brings the council to comply with WIOA.

**Oregon**

**OR H 2408**: Changes the name of the Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development to the Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development. Transfers authority to spend unexpended balances to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission.

**OR H 2410**: Allows the board of a district operating a community college to award training certificates indicating satisfactory completion of noncredit courses and programs. Requires the board to ensure that the course meets an occupational employment need and fulfills a regional educational need.

**OR S 686**: Makes a technical change to include people enrolled in alternative education programs to be considered out-of-school youth to comply with WIOA.

**Pennsylvania**

**PA H 131**: Amends existing law to provide in-state tuition rates at community colleges and state sponsored higher education institutions for veterans, their spouses and dependent children.

**PA H 157**: Amends existing law to allow veterans to renew any professional license, certification or registration within one year of their discharge from service without penalty. Also requires that a veteran’s military service, education, training and service experience be taken into consideration when determining if various licensing and/or certification requirements have been met. Allows waivers to be issued.

**Rhode Island**

**RI HR 5992**: Recognizes career and technical education month in the state.

**South Carolina**

*No bills identified at this time.*

**South Dakota**

**SD H 1117**: Allows any high school student to apply to an institution of higher education or a postsecondary technical institute with the school district’s approval to receive both high school and higher education credit for the course. Also extends this opportunity to students enrolled in nonpublic or tribal schools with permission from the postsecondary institution.

**SD S 32**: Requires that preference for appointment, employment and promotion is given to veterans in all public departments in the state.

**SD S 906**: Requires school districts to give preference for appointment, employment and promotion to veterans in the state.

**Tennessee**

**TN S 104**: Updates references from WIOA in state law. Prohibits discrimination by appointing authorities in the Department of Labor and workforce development programs to include discrimination on the base of sex or disabilities.

**Texas**

**TX H 3685**: Clarifies the employment status for people involved in a rehabilitative work-training program for the purposes of compensation.
TX S 208: Transfers the primary responsibility of vocational rehabilitation programs from the Rehabilitation Council to the Texas Workforce Commission. Specifies expectations for these programs and requires the submission of a transition plan. Creates a Legislative Oversight Committee comprised of four members appointed from each legislative chamber and three members of the public appointed by the governor.

Utah
UT H 65: Requires that parents participating in the Family Employment Program are required be assigned an employment counselor, complete relevant assessments to gauge workforce participation ability and complete an employment plan. Establishes guidelines for the required activities.

UT H 198: Creates the Strengthening College and Career Readiness Program to enhance the skill level of school counselors to provide college and career counseling.

UT H 232: Authorizes private employers to create voluntary, written veteran employment preference programs. Provides requirements for such programs including employer guidelines and verification of veteran eligibility.

UT H 337: Creates the Career and Technical Education Board within the Department of Workforce Services. Requires the board to conduct a comprehensive study including information about 1) Existing career and technical education programs in the state, 2) Employment information about students completing these programs; 3) A description of career and technical education funding in the state and the location/purpose of allocated funds; 4) An assessment of Utah business and industry needs for employees; 5) The number of current and anticipated jobs in Utah by geographic region and career and technical skills needed to obtain these jobs; and 6) Any other relevant information. Outlines membership guidelines of the board, study protocol and requires a report of study findings.

Vermont
VT S 138: Extends loan forgiveness provided under the Vermont Strong Scholars Program and Internship Initiative to occupations that are deemed critical in the state. Adds the Association of Vermont Independent Colleges to the group that designates high-need occupations. Directs the Agency of Education, Department of Labor, Agency of Commerce and Community Development and the Vermont State Colleges to collaborate on how to strengthen the state’s centers for career technical education to provide training that results in high-wage, high-skill and high-demand employment opportunities for residents.

Virginia
VA S 1002: Encourages local workforce investment boards to implement pay-for-performance incentives for rapid reemployment services as an alternative model for traditional programs. Authorizes local boards to allocate funds for these programs as authorized under WIOA.

VA H 1523: Creates the Virginia Workforce Network to coordinate and consolidate workforce development programs and information across the state. Defines guidelines and role of the Virginia Board of Workforce Development in compliance with WIOA.

VA H 1986 and VA S 1372: Makes several changes to the Virginia Board of Workforce Development. Requires quarterly meetings and establishes a full-time director position. Requires each agency administering any publicly funded career and technical education and workforce development program to submit to the governor and the board an annual report detailing the program’s performance against state-level metrics. Requires each local workforce development board to develop and execute a strategic plan designed to combine public and private resources to support sector strategies, career pathways and career readiness skills development.
Washington
WA H 1546: Establishes a new funding model for dual enrollment programs that assists students with transportation and book expenses. Requires the Student Achievement Council, in collaboration with the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and public baccalaureate institutions, to make recommendations to the legislature for streamlining and improving dual credit programs.

WA S 5355: Expands the definition of a resident student to include honorably discharged veterans and current or surviving spouses and/or children of an eligible veteran.

West Virginia
No bills identified at this time.

Wisconsin
WI S 21: Allows workforce training grants to be used for apprenticeship programs. Permits the Department of Workforce Development to provide grants to school districts to train and certify students for jobs in fields experiencing a workforce shortage. Prohibits the Technical College Board from increasing program fees for courses related to jobs in high demand.

WI S 164: Requires technical college districts to charge resident tuition fees to veterans living in the state as well as their spouses and children. Specifies guidelines.

Wyoming
WY S 101: Amends current law to make resident tuition available to veterans and their family members including the surviving spouse or child of a service member killed in action after Sept. 11, 2001.

District of Columbia
DC B 283 and DC B 158: Requires a task force to submit a plan to address career pathways for adults and authorizes Career Pathways Innovation grants.