

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4877

To allow State manufacturing extension partnerships to award grants to small- and medium-sized manufacturers for the purpose of training new workers to replace departing experienced workers.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 28, 2019

Mr. LANGEVIN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

A BILL

To allow State manufacturing extension partnerships to award grants to small- and medium-sized manufacturers for the purpose of training new workers to replace departing experienced workers.

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 “Retain Innovation and
5 Manufacturing Excellence (RIME) Act of 2019”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

1 (1) CENTER.—The term “Center” has the
2 meaning given the term in section 25(a) of the Na-
3 tional Institute of Standards and Technology Act
4 (15 U.S.C. 278k(a)).

5 (2) ELIGIBLE MANUFACTURERS.—The term
6 “eligible manufacturer” means a manufacturer
7 that—

8 (A) is a small business concern, as that
9 term is defined under section 3 of the Small
10 Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632); and

11 (B) has an existing relationship with a
12 Center.

13 **SEC. 3. PILOT PROGRAM.**

14 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Commerce shall
15 establish a pilot program to award National Institute of
16 Standards and Technology Manufacturing Extension
17 Partnership (MEP) grants to help ensure an adequately
18 trained manufacturing workforce. Under the program, eli-
19 gible Centers may award MEP grants to eligible manufac-
20 turers to retain retiring employees for up to 90 days for
21 the purpose of transferring job-specific skills and training
22 to existing or new employees. The length of each grant
23 shall be determined through negotiations between the Cen-
24 ter and the eligible manufacturer.

1 (b) ELIGIBILITY.—In order to be eligible to receive
2 funding and award grants under the program, a Center
3 must meet the following criteria:

4 (1) A Center must be able to document evi-
5 dence of an aging workforce within manufacturing
6 firms that are seeking assistance with retaining
7 skills and knowledge of their operations.

8 (2) A Center shall establish a transparent appli-
9 cation process for eligible manufacturing firms that
10 may include one or more of the following pref-
11 erences:

12 (A) A preference for manufacturers that
13 employ veterans discharged or released under
14 honorable conditions.

15 (B) A preference for manufacturing firms
16 from industry sectors that are most in need of
17 assistance as determined by the local MEP.

18 (C) A preference for manufacturing firms
19 with a facility in the State or region for an ex-
20 tended period of time before the application is
21 submitted (as determined by the Center).

22 (D) A preference for manufacturing firms
23 that have an existing relationship with the local
24 MEP.

1 (3) A Center must be able to demonstrate their
2 ability to assess, advise, and train manufacturers on
3 how to transfer the job-specific skills and training
4 through the implementation of a training structure
5 and train-the-trainer program focused on knowledge
6 capture and transfer.

7 (c) TRAINING.—In awarding grants pursuant to this
8 section, consideration shall be given to the use of funds
9 by Centers to assist manufacturers that are experiencing
10 high employee turnover due to their inability to transfer
11 required job-specific skills and training to new employees
12 with the implementation of training structures and train-
13 the-trainer programs.

14 (d) COST SHARING.—To be eligible for a grant under
15 the pilot program under this section, a Center shall dem-
16 onstrate that 50 percent of the amount of the funds
17 awarded are matched from non-Federal sources. Those
18 sources may include State and local agencies engaged in
19 workforce development, foundations engaged in workforce
20 development, or an in-kind contribution from an employer
21 that would stand to directly benefit from the grant re-
22 ceived by the Center.

23 (e) NUMBER AND SIZE OF AWARDS.—

24 (1) NUMBER.—The Secretary may award up to
25 25 grants to Centers under the pilot program.

1 (2) SIZE.—Each award under the program
2 shall be for not less than \$50,000 and not more
3 than \$500,000.

4 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
5 authorized to be appropriated to the National Institute of
6 Standards and Technology \$10,000,000 to carry out the
7 pilot program.

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