

108TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. 2256

To amend part A of title IV of the Social Security Act to exempt preparation for high-skill, high-demand jobs from participation and time limits under the temporary assistance for needy families program.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 30, 2004

Ms. CANTWELL introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance

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## A BILL

To amend part A of title IV of the Social Security Act to exempt preparation for high-skill, high-demand jobs from participation and time limits under the temporary assistance for needy families program.

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. ENCOURAGING THE PREPARATION OF TANF**  
4                       **RECIPIENTS FOR HIGH-SKILL, HIGH-DEMAND**  
5                       **JOBS.**

6       (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 407(c)(2)(D) of the Social  
7       Security Act (42 U.S.C. 607(c)(2)(D)) is amended to read  
8       as follows:

“(D) LIMITATION ON NUMBER OF PERSONS WHO MAY BE TREATED AS ENGAGED IN WORK BY REASON OF PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), for purposes of subsection (b)(1)(B)(i), not more than 30 percent of the number of individuals in all families in a State who are treated as engaged in work for a month may consist of individuals who are—

“(I) determined to be engaged in work for the month by reason of participation in vocational educational training (but only with respect to such training that does not exceed 12 months with respect to any individual); or

“(II) deemed to be engaged in work for the month by reason of subparagraph (C) of this paragraph.

“(ii) EXCEPTION FOR EDUCATION IN PREPARATION FOR SECTOR-SPECIFIC, HIGH-SKILL OCCUPATIONS TO MEET EMPLOYER DEMAND.—

1                   “(I) IN GENERAL.—Notwith-  
2 standing clause (i) and subsection  
3 (d)(8), for purposes of determining  
4 monthly participation rates under sub-  
5 section (b)(1)(B)(i) with respect to an  
6 individual who is enrolled, in prepara-  
7 tion for a sector-specific, high-skill oc-  
8 cupation to meet employer demand  
9 (as defined in subclause (II)), in a  
10 postsecondary 2- or 4-year degree pro-  
11 gram or in vocational educational  
12 training—

13                   “(aa) the State may count  
14 the number of hours per week  
15 that the individual attends such  
16 program or training for purposes  
17 of determining the number of  
18 hours for which a family is en-  
19 gaged in work for the month  
20 without regard to the 30 percent  
21 limitation under clause (i); and

22                   “(bb) the individual shall be  
23 permitted to complete the re-  
24 quirements of the degree pro-  
25 gram or vocational educational

1 training within the normal time-  
2 frame for full-time students seek-  
3 ing the particular degree or com-  
4 pleting such vocational edu-  
5 cational training.

6 “(II) SECTOR-SPECIFIC, HIGH-  
7 SKILL OCCUPATION TO MEET EM-  
8 PLOYER DEMAND DEFINED.—In sub-  
9 clause (I), the term ‘sector-specific,  
10 high-demand, high-skill occupation to  
11 meet employer demand’ means an oc-  
12 cupation—

13 “(aa) that has been identi-  
14 fied by the State workforce in-  
15 vestment board established under  
16 section 111 of the Workforce In-  
17 vestment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C.  
18 2821) as within the needs of the  
19 State with regard to current and  
20 projected employment opportuni-  
21 ties in specific industry sectors or  
22 that has been defined by the  
23 State agency administering the  
24 State program funded under this  
25 part as within the needs of the

1 State with regard to current and  
2 projected employment opportuni-  
3 ties in specific industry sectors  
4 and is consistent with high de-  
5 mand jobs identified in the State  
6 plan in accordance with section  
7 402(a)(1)(A)(vii);

8 “(bb) that requires occupa-  
9 tional training; and

10 “(cc) that provides a wage  
11 of at least 75 percent of the  
12 State median hourly wage, as cal-  
13 culated by the Bureau of Labor  
14 Statistics on the basis of the  
15 most recent Occupational Em-  
16 ployment and Wage Survey.”.

17 (b) CONFORMING STATE PLAN AMENDMENT.—Sec-  
18 tion 402(a)(1)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.  
19 602(a)(1)(A)) is amended by adding at the end the fol-  
20 lowing:

21 “(vii) Describe any strategies and pro-  
22 grams the State plans to use to address  
23 employment retention and advancement for  
24 recipients of assistance under the program,  
25 including placement into high-demand jobs,

1                   and whether the jobs are identified using  
2                   labor market information.”.

3       (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by  
4 this section take effect on October 1, 2004.

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