

117TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

**S.** \_\_\_\_\_

To amend the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 to establish a pilot program to provide competitive grants to land-grant colleges and universities to facilitate research and rapid workforce development and promote entrepreneurship and other benefits to communities, and for other purposes.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. HICKENLOOPER (for himself and Mrs. FISCHER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

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**A BILL**

To amend the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 to establish a pilot program to provide competitive grants to land-grant colleges and universities to facilitate research and rapid workforce development and promote entrepreneurship and other benefits to communities, 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “National Innovation  
3 and Modern Skills Training Act of 2022”.

4 **SEC. 2. NATIONAL INNOVATION AND MODERN SKILLS**  
5 **TRAINING COMPETITIVE GRANT PILOT PRO-**  
6 **GRAM.**

7 The National Agricultural Research, Extension, and  
8 Teaching Policy Act of 1977 is amended by inserting after  
9 section 1418 (7 U.S.C. 3153) the following:

10 **“SEC. 1419. NATIONAL INNOVATION AND MODERN SKILLS**  
11 **TRAINING COMPETITIVE GRANT PILOT PRO-**  
12 **GRAM.**

13 “(a) DEFINITION OF LAND-GRANT COLLEGE OR UNI-  
14 VERSITY.—In this section, the term ‘land-grant college or  
15 university’ includes a 1994 Institution (as defined in sec-  
16 tion 532 of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status  
17 Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note; Public Law 103–382)).

18 “(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall estab-  
19 lish a pilot program (referred to in this section as the  
20 ‘pilot program’) to award competitive grants to land-grant  
21 colleges and universities to carry out activities described  
22 in subsection (c).

23 “(c) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—

24 “(1) IN GENERAL.—A land-grant college or uni-  
25 versity that receives a grant under the pilot program  
26 shall use the grant funds to establish a statewide

1 program, in cooperation with cooperative extension  
2 services and industry experts, to facilitate research  
3 and rapid workforce development and promote entre-  
4 preneurship and other benefits to communities  
5 across the applicable State.

6 “(2) WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, RESEARCH,  
7 AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMS.—

8 “(A) IN GENERAL.—A statewide program  
9 established under paragraph (1) shall be com-  
10 posed of 1 or more workforce development, re-  
11 search, or entrepreneurship programs, which  
12 shall—

13 “(i) be provided through cooperative  
14 extension services, in partnership with 1 or  
15 more colleges or universities in the applica-  
16 ble geographic area;

17 “(ii) be administered by the applicable  
18 land-grant college or university; and

19 “(iii) confer to a participant a meas-  
20 urable benefit or credential on successful  
21 completion of the program.

22 “(B) WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PRO-  
23 GRAMS.—A workforce development program es-  
24 tablished under subparagraph (A) shall—

1 “(i) offer flexible and alternative edu-  
2 cational pathways to promote workforce  
3 development, including—

4 “(I) stackable credentials;

5 “(II) micro degrees;

6 “(III) boot camps; or

7 “(IV) credit-by-examination pro-  
8 grams; and

9 “(ii) focus on the middle- and high-  
10 skilled jobs needed in the economy, includ-  
11 ing local and remote work opportunities,  
12 with an emphasis on the unemployed and  
13 underemployed, through rapid upskilling,  
14 registered apprenticeships, and mentorship  
15 opportunities.

16 “(C) RESEARCH PROGRAMS.—A research  
17 program established under subparagraph (A)—

18 “(i) may be tailored to support the  
19 needs of regional attributes, workforce  
20 needs, and economic development goals;  
21 and

22 “(ii) shall—

23 “(I) immerse participants in  
24 emerging science, technology, engi-  
25 neering, and mathematics fields and

1 technologies such as artificial intel-  
2 ligence, cybersecurity, advanced com-  
3 puting, advanced manufacturing, 3D  
4 technology and printing, data man-  
5 agement and use, digital technologies,  
6 biotechnology, health information  
7 technology, agricultural technology,  
8 advanced telecommunications, and ro-  
9 botics;

10 “(II) be tailored to support—

11 “(aa) the needs of large in-  
12 dustry partners and their innova-  
13 tion pipelines;

14 “(bb) regional attributes; or

15 “(cc) economic development  
16 goals;

17 “(III) consist of research con-  
18 ducted by the land-grant college or  
19 university in partnership with the ap-  
20 plicable community; and

21 “(IV) include the provision of  
22 match-funded research grants to local  
23 community members—

24 “(aa) to conduct research  
25 led by the land-grant college or

1 university under subclause (III);

2 and

3 “(bb) to submit to faculty of  
4 the land-grant college or univer-  
5 sity or staff of the cooperative ex-  
6 tension service quarterly reports  
7 describing findings of the re-  
8 search conducted under item  
9 (aa), which may be shared with  
10 private sector providers of  
11 grants.

12 “(D) ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMS.—  
13 An entrepreneurship program established under  
14 subparagraph (A)—

15 “(i) shall focus on—

16 “(I) the strengths of local histor-  
17 ical industries;

18 “(II) the modern globalized  
19 versions of those industries;

20 “(III) the innovation opportuni-  
21 ties within those industries;

22 “(IV) the needs of the commu-  
23 nity; and

24 “(V) the variety of localized in-  
25 dustries in the region; and

1                   “(ii) may focus on creating an entre-  
2                   preneurial environment, professional net-  
3                   work, mentoring, and other resources to  
4                   develop strong entrepreneurial ecosystems  
5                   and small businesses—

6                   “(I) to spur economic develop-  
7                   ment in underrepresented commu-  
8                   nities; and

9                   “(II) to develop the next genera-  
10                  tion of entrepreneurs across the  
11                  United States.

12                  “(E) COLLABORATION.—In carrying out a  
13                  workforce development, research, or entrepre-  
14                  neurship program under this paragraph, a land-  
15                  grant college or university is encouraged to col-  
16                  laborate with private-sector partners, workforce  
17                  development boards, other institutions of higher  
18                  education, and local leaders to develop pro-  
19                  grams that—

20                  “(i) meet the professional and social  
21                  needs of the applicable community; and

22                  “(ii) address areas of national impor-  
23                  tance or need.

24                  “(d) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible for a grant under  
25                  the pilot program, a land-grant college or university—

1           “(1) shall submit to the Secretary an applica-  
2           tion at such time, in such manner, and containing  
3           such information as the Secretary may require, in-  
4           cluding—

5                   “(A) a demonstration of the availability of  
6                   matching funding from the private sector equal  
7                   to the amount of the grant to carry out activi-  
8                   ties under the pilot program;

9                   “(B) a 12-month plan that defines out-  
10                  come goals under the pilot program for work-  
11                  force, entrepreneurship, and research focuses;  
12                  and

13                  “(C) a demonstration of community en-  
14                  gagement or community partners;

15                  “(2) may submit an application under para-  
16                  graph (1) jointly with 1 or more other land-grant  
17                  colleges or universities in the same State; and

18                  “(3) shall be subject to an evaluation, including  
19                  metrics, relating to the performance of the land-  
20                  grant college or university under the pilot program.

21           “(e) SELECTION OF RECIPIENTS.—The Secretary  
22 shall provide grants under the pilot program—

23                   “(1) to land-grant colleges or universities in 10  
24                   States, including not more than 1 land-grant college  
25                   or university in any State, unless 2 or more land-



1 grant colleges or universities in a State submit a  
2 joint application in accordance with subsection  
3 (d)(2); and

4 “(2) taking into consideration—

5 “(A) regional and geographic diversity; and

6 “(B) the capacity of a land-grant college or  
7 university to engage industry, the workforce,  
8 and other organizations.

9 “(f) AMOUNT AND DURATION.—A grant under the  
10 pilot program shall be—

11 “(1) in the amount of \$5,000,000; and

12 “(2) provided over a 3-year period.

13 “(g) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR.—

14 The Secretary may appoint an Economic Development Co-  
15 ordinator—

16 “(1) to work with recipients of grants under  
17 this section; and

18 “(2) to coordinate efforts with cooperative ex-  
19 tension services.

20 “(h) COORDINATION.—In carrying out the pilot pro-  
21 gram, the Secretary shall coordinate with—

22 “(1) the Secretary of Commerce;

23 “(2) the Secretary of Labor;

24 “(3) the Secretary of Education;

1           “(4) the Administrator of the Small Business  
2 Administration; and

3           “(5) the Director of the National Science Foun-  
4 dation.

5           “(i) REPORTS.—

6           “(1) ECONOMIC IMPACT REPORTS.—Not later  
7 than 180 days after the end of the period of a grant  
8 under the pilot program, the recipient of the grant  
9 shall submit to the Secretary a report describing the  
10 economic impacts of activities carried out using the  
11 grant.

12           “(2) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than  
13 180 days after the Secretary receives the report  
14 under paragraph (1) from the last recipient of a  
15 grant under the pilot program, the Secretary shall  
16 submit to Congress a report describing the economic  
17 impacts of activities carried out using grants under  
18 the pilot program, based on the reports submitted to  
19 the Secretary under paragraph (1).”.