

# HB600 INTRODUCED



1 HB600  
2 11KWEL3-1  
3 By Representatives Jones, Daniels, Drummond, McClammy, Lands,  
4 Jackson, Warren, Rafferty, Morris, Hendrix, Travis, Datcher,  
5 Sellers, McCampbell, Moore (M), Bracy, Tillman, Lawrence,  
6 Chestnut, Hassell, Hall, Ensler, Hollis, Gray  
7 RFD: Ways and Means General Fund  
8 First Read: 10-Mar-26



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SYNOPSIS:

This bill would create the Skilled Trades Workforce Recovery Program Act to provide full tuition for rural residents enrolled in eligible trade programs; provide grants to employers in rural areas who sponsor registered apprenticeships in high-demand fields; offer stipends to students and trainees for purchasing required tools or commuting to job sites and training facilities; fund a statewide campaign to promote trade careers; and to recognize prior work experience and military training toward trade certifications.

This bill would require the Alabama Department of Workforce to administer the programs.

A BILL  
TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

Skilled trades; to require Department of Workforce to establish programs that provide full tuition for rural residents enrolled in eligible trade programs, provide grants to employers in rural areas who sponsor registered apprenticeships in high-demand fields, offer stipends to



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29 students and trainees for purchasing required tools or  
30 commuting to job sites and training facilities, and fund a  
31 statewide campaign to promote trade careers; and to recognize  
32 prior work experience and military training toward trade  
33 certifications.

34 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

35 Section 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as  
36 the Skilled Trades Workforce Recovery Program Act.

37 Section 2. The purpose of this act is to increase  
38 workforce participation in high-demand skilled trades by  
39 expanding access to affordable training and incentivizing  
40 employer-based apprenticeships, especially in rural and  
41 economically distressed areas.

42 Section 3. For purposes of this act, the following  
43 terms have the following meanings:

44 (1) DEPARTMENT. The Department of Workforce.

45 (2) ELIGIBLE PROGRAM. A trade certification program in  
46 fields identified as high-need by the department.

47 (3) RURAL AREA. A jurisdiction designated by the  
48 department as rural based on population thresholds and  
49 distance from major urban centers.

50 Section 4. (a) Subject to the Legislature appropriating  
51 funds for this purpose, the department shall establish and  
52 administer the Tuition-Free Technical Training for Priority  
53 Trades Program. The purpose of the program is to reimburse  
54 public community colleges and technical schools for tuition  
55 costs incurred by students who reside in rural areas and are  
56 enrolled in eligible programs. The purpose of this program is



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57 to cover full tuition at two-year public institutions of  
58 higher education for these students.

59 (b) Students must maintain satisfactory academic  
60 progress, as determined, by the department, to remain eligible  
61 and must complete the program within three years.

62 Section 5. (a) Subject to the Legislature appropriating  
63 funds for this purpose, the department shall establish and  
64 administer the Rural Apprenticeship Incentive Fund to provide  
65 grants to employers in rural areas who sponsor registered  
66 apprenticeships in high-demand fields such as welding,  
67 transport requiring commercial driver licenses, electrical,  
68 and HVAC.

69 (b) The department shall provide grants of up to five  
70 thousand dollars (\$5,000) per apprentice to employers in rural  
71 areas who:

72 (1) Sponsor registered apprenticeships recognized by  
73 the U.S. Department of Labor or the Department of Workforce;  
74 and

75 (2) Employ the apprentice for at least one year.

76 (c) Grants may be used for wages, training materials,  
77 or program administration.

78 (d) The department may adopt rules as necessary to  
79 implement this section.

80 Section 6. (a) Subject to the Legislature appropriating  
81 funds for this purpose, the department shall establish and  
82 administer the Tools and Transportation Assistance Program.  
83 The department shall provide stipends of up to one thousand  
84 dollars (\$1,000) per recipient to reimburse for:



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85 (1) Required tools and safety equipment;

86 (2) Reliable transportation to job sites or training  
87 centers.

88 (b) Funds shall be distributed based on financial need  
89 and distance from the training site.

90 (c) The department may adopt rules as necessary to  
91 implement this section.

92 Section 7. (a) Subject to the Legislature appropriating  
93 funds for this purpose, the department shall design and  
94 implement the Skilled Trades Education and Outreach Campaign  
95 to fund a statewide campaign to promote trade careers to high  
96 school students, parents, and job seekers.

97 (b) The Skilled Trades Education and Outreach Campaign  
98 shall:

99 (1) Promote awareness of skilled trade careers; and

100 (2) Highlight pathways through community colleges,  
101 apprenticeships, and credentialing programs.

102 (c) Materials shall be distributed through high  
103 schools, career centers, and digital platforms.

104 (d) The department may adopt rules as necessary to  
105 implement this section.

106 Section 8. (a) Subject to the Legislature appropriating  
107 funds for this purpose, the department shall establish and  
108 administer the Fast-Track Credential Recognition Initiative  
109 Program to expedite recognition of prior work experience and  
110 military training toward trade certifications.

111 (b) The department shall work with credentialing bodies  
112 to develop a system for recognizing:



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113 (1) Prior work experience;

114 (2) Military occupational training; and

115 (3) Related nondegree credentials.

116 (c) The program shall offer accelerated pathways to

117 trade certification based on documented prior learning.

118 (d) The department may adopt rules as necessary to

119 implement this section.

120 Section 9. This act shall become effective on July 1,

121 2026.