

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2642

**Introduced by Assembly Members Eduardo Garcia, Eggman,
Cristina Garcia, Gomez, and Maienschein**

February 19, 2016

An act to add Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 14600) to Division 7 of the Unemployment Insurance Code, relating to workforce development, and making an appropriation therefor.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2642, as introduced, Eduardo Garcia. Removing Barriers to Employment Act.

The California Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act establishes the California Workforce Development Board as the body responsible for assisting the Governor in the development, oversight, and continuous improvement of California's workforce investment system and the alignment of the education and workforce investment systems to the needs of the 21st century economy and workforce.

This bill would enact the Removing Barriers to Employment Act, which would require the California Workforce Investment Board to work with the Employment Development Department to create a grant program to provide funds to local workforce investment boards and community-based organizations working in partnership on proposals that will address the needs of persons who have multiple barriers to employment, to prepare them for training, apprenticeship or employment opportunities that will lead to self-sufficiency and economic stability. The bill would additionally appropriate an unspecified amount from an unspecified fund to the California Workforce Investment Board for administration of the grant program.

Vote: 2/3. Appropriation: yes. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 14600) is
2 added to Division 7 of the Unemployment Insurance Code, to read:

3

4

CHAPTER 6. REMOVING BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT ACT

5

6 14600. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

7 (a) The economy in California continues to improve as shown
8 by lower unemployment rates and job growth, but poverty is still
9 an issue in many of our cities and among many of our citizens.

10 The California Poverty Measure reported in 2015 that 78 percent
11 of Californians in poverty live in families with at least one adult
12 working, with 69 percent of those working full time. Low-income
13 families continue to struggle to pay for the basic cost of supporting
14 their families. With low wages and lack of job skills, this target
15 population falls further behind and cannot escape poverty.

16 (b) Lack of formal education, low English literacy and
17 lower-level job skills prevent upward mobility in pay and job
18 stability. There is a need for improved access and funding to
19 provide “career pathways” services, particularly for the poor.

20 (c) Increased funding for supportive services such as child care,
21 transportation, English language improvement training, adult
22 education, high school diploma and GED acquisition, skills
23 training, work experience, on-the-job training, earn-as-you-learn,
24 industry certifications, mentoring, case management and more is
25 needed to bridge the gap to gainful employment for the more
26 difficult to reach in our population.

27 (d) Local community-based organizations, government agencies
28 and workforce investment boards throughout California struggle
29 to provide adequate services to the increasing number of poor
30 residents who need career pathways services. In particular, funding
31 is needed for case management, career guidance, and support
32 services that enhance training/job retention and the ability to meet
33 family basic expense needs while pursuing a career opportunity.

34 (e) Special emphasis is needed to make sure that programs reach
35 those among us with the most difficult needs with the goal of

1 preparing those persons for training, educational, apprenticeship
2 or employment opportunities.

3 14601. (a) The California Workforce Investment Board shall
4 work with the Employment Development Department to create a
5 grant program to provide funds to local workforce investment
6 boards and community-based organizations working in partnership
7 on proposals that will address the needs of persons who have
8 multiple barriers to employment to prepare them for training,
9 apprenticeship or employment opportunities that will lead to
10 self-sufficiency and economic stability.

11 (b) The grant program shall require grant proposals to meet the
12 following:

13 (1) Grant proposals shall demonstrate how the grant recipient
14 will address the needs of one or more of the following populations:

15 (A) Youths who are disconnected from the education system
16 or employment.

17 (B) Women seeking training or education to move into
18 nontraditional fields of employment.

19 (C) Workers displaced by the movement of an employer or
20 those who are long-term unemployed.

21 (D) Unskilled or under-skilled, low-earning workers looking to
22 advance into better-paying employment opportunities.

23 (E) Persons for whom English is not their primary language.

24 (F) Economically disadvantaged persons who face barriers to
25 reaching training or apprenticeship opportunities for sustainable
26 careers.

27 (G) CalWORKS participants.

28 (H) Persons who are incarcerated and soon to be released or
29 formerly incarcerated.

30 (I) Armed services veterans who face barriers due to skills that
31 are not applicable to employment, training, apprenticeship
32 opportunities in the region in which they live, or because of mental
33 health, health, or other barriers that serve as impediments to those
34 opportunities.

35 (J) Native Americans or migrant, seasonal farmworkers.

36 (K) People with developmental or other disabilities.

37 (2) Grant proposals shall include a method to measure success
38 of any program funded by the grant. Measurements of success may
39 include, but are not limited to:

- 1 (A) The number of participants in the program who have
2 completed a high school diploma or received a GED.
- 3 (B) The number of participants in the program who have
4 completed a remedial education program.
- 5 (C) The number of participants in the program who have
6 completed a work readiness program.
- 7 (D) The number of participants who have received assistance
8 to enroll their children in after school programs while the program
9 participant enroll in secondary or postsecondary education or
10 maintains employment.
- 11 (E) The number of participants who have obtained access to
12 reliable transportation or received a driver's license since
13 enrollment in the program.
- 14 (F) The number of participants who have completed a certified
15 drug treatment or mental health program.
- 16 (G) The number of participants who have obtained and
17 maintained safe housing.
- 18 (H) The number of participants who have completed a
19 pre-apprenticeship program.
- 20 (c) The amount of ____ is appropriated from the ____ fund to
21 the California Workforce Investment Board to carry out this
22 section.