H. R. 987

To establish a grant program for domestic maritime workforce training and education, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

February 11, 2021

Ms. Garcia of Texas (for herself, Mr. Young, Ms. Pingree, Mr. Lowenthal, and Mr. Case) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

To establish a grant program for domestic maritime workforce training and education, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE FOR DOMESTIC MARITIME WORKFORCE TRAINING AND EDUCATION.

Section 54102 of title 46, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “of Transportation”;
(2) in subsection (b), in the subsection heading, by striking “ASSISTANCE” and inserting “COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS”;

(3) by redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (d);

(4) in subsection (d), as redesignated by paragraph (2), by adding at the end the following:

“(3) SECRETARY.—The term ‘Secretary’ means the Secretary of Transportation.”; and

(5) by inserting after subsection (b) the following:

“(c) GRANT PROGRAM.—

“(1) DEFINITION OF ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—

In this subsection, the term ‘eligible institution’ means an institution of higher education (as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)) that offers a 2-year program of study, a 1-year program of training, or is a postsecondary vocational institution.

“(2) GRANT AUTHORIZATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Maritime Administration Authorization and Improvement Act, the Secretary may award maritime career training grants to eligible institutions for the
purpose of developing, offering, or improving educational or career training programs for American workers related to the maritime workforce.

“(B) GUIDELINES.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of the Maritime Administration Authorization and Improvement Act, the Secretary shall—

“(i) promulgate guidelines for the submission of grant proposals under this subsection; and

“(ii) publish and maintain such guidelines on the website of the Department of Transportation.

“(3) LIMITATIONS.—The Secretary may not award a grant under this subsection in an amount that is more than $20,000,000.

“(4) REQUIRED INFORMATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—An eligible institution that desires to receive a grant under this subsection shall submit to the Secretary a grant proposal that includes a detailed description of—

“(i) the specific project for which the grant proposal is submitted, including the
manner in which the grant will be used to develop, offer, or improve an educational or career training program that is suited to maritime industry workers;

“(ii) the extent to which the project for which the grant proposal is submitted will meet the educational or career training needs of maritime workers in the community served by the eligible institution;

“(iii) the extent to which the project for which the grant proposal is submitted fits within any overall strategic plan developed by an eligible community; and

“(iv) any previous experience of the eligible institution in providing maritime educational or career training programs.

“(B) COMMUNITY OUTREACH REQUIRED.—In order to be considered by the Secretary, a grant proposal submitted by an eligible institution under this subsection shall—

“(i) demonstrate that the eligible institution—

“(I) reached out to employers to identify—
“(aa) any shortcomings in existing maritime educational and career training opportunities available to workers in the community; and

“(bb) any future employment opportunities within the community and the educational and career training skills required for workers to meet the future maritime employment demand; and

“(II) reached out to other similarly situated institutions in an effort to benefit from any best practices that may be shared with respect to providing maritime educational or career training programs to workers eligible for training; and

“(ii) include a detailed description of—

“(I) the extent and outcome of the outreach conducted under clause (i);
“(II) the extent to which the project for which the grant proposal is submitted will contribute to meeting any shortcomings identified under clause (i)(I)(aa) or any maritime educational or career training needs identified under clause (i)(I)(bb); and

“(III) the extent to which employers, including small- and medium-sized firms within the community, have demonstrated a commitment to employing workers who would benefit from the project for which the grant proposal is submitted.

“(5) CRITERIA FOR AWARD OF GRANTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the appropriation of funds, the Secretary shall award a grant under this subsection based on—

“(i) a determination of the merits of the grant proposal submitted by the eligible institution to develop, offer, or improve maritime educational or career training programs to be made available to workers;

“(ii) an evaluation of the likely employment opportunities available to workers
who complete a maritime educational or career training program that the eligible institution proposes to develop, offer, or improve;

“(iii) an evaluation of prior demand for training programs by workers in the community served by the eligible institution, as well as the availability and capacity of existing maritime training programs to meet future demand for training programs; and

“(iv) any prior designation of an institution as a Center of Excellence for Domestic Maritime Workforce Training and Education.

“(B) Matching Requirements.—A grant awarded under this subsection may not be used to satisfy any private matching requirement under any other provision of law.

“(6) Public Report.—Not later than December 15 in each of the calendar years 2021 through 2023, the Secretary shall make available on a publicly available website a report and provide a briefing to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on
Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives—

“(A) describing each grant awarded under this subsection during the preceding fiscal year; and

“(B) assessing the impact of each award of a grant under this subsection in a fiscal year preceding the fiscal year referred to in subparagraph (A) on workers receiving training.

“(7) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subsection $200,000,000.”.