

AN ACT concerning State government.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,  
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 5. The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Law of the Civil Administrative Code of Illinois is amended by adding Section 913 as follows:

(20 ILCS 605/913 new)

Sec. 913. Clean Water Workforce Pipeline Program.

(a) The General Assembly finds the following:

(1) The fresh surface water and groundwater supply in Illinois and Lake Michigan constitute vital natural resources that require careful stewardship and protection for future generations. Access to safe and clean drinking water is the right of all Illinois residents.

(2) To adequately protect these resources and provide safe and clean drinking water, substantial investment is needed to replace lead components in drinking water infrastructure, improve wastewater treatment, flood control, and stormwater management, control aquatic invasive species, implement green infrastructure solutions, and implement other infrastructure solutions to protect water quality.

(3) Implementing these clean water solutions will

require a skilled and trained workforce, and new investments will demand additional workers with specialized skills.

(4) Water infrastructure jobs have been shown to provide living wages and contribute to Illinois' economy.

(5) Significant populations of Illinois residents, including, but not limited to, residents of environmental justice communities, economically and socially disadvantaged communities, those returning from the criminal justice system, foster care alumni, and in particular women and transgender persons, are in need of access to skilled living wage jobs like those in the water infrastructure sector.

(6) Many of these residents are more likely to live in communities with aging and inadequate clean water infrastructure and suffer from threats to surface and drinking water quality.

(7) The State can provide significant economic opportunities to these residents and achieve greater environmental and public health by investing in clean water infrastructure.

(8) New training, recruitment, support, and placement efforts are needed to connect these residents with career opportunities in water infrastructure.

(9) The State must invest in both clean water infrastructure and workforce development efforts in order

to achieve these goals.

(b) From appropriations made from the Build Illinois Bond Fund, Capital Development Fund, or General Revenue Fund or other funds as identified by the Department, the Department shall create a Clean Water Workforce Pipeline Program to provide grants and other financial assistance to prepare and support individuals for careers in water infrastructure. All funding provided by the Program under this Section shall be designed to encourage and facilitate employment in projects funded through State capital investment and provide participants a skill set to allow them to work professionally in fields related to water infrastructure.

Grants and other financial assistance may be made available on a competitive annual basis to organizations that demonstrate a capacity to recruit, support, train, and place individuals in water infrastructure careers, including, but not limited to, community organizations, educational institutions, workforce investment boards, community action agencies, and multi-craft labor organizations for new efforts specifically focused on engaging residents of environmental justice communities, economically and socially disadvantaged communities, those returning from the criminal justice system, foster care alumni, and in particular women and transgender persons in these populations.

Grants and other financial assistance shall be awarded on a competitive and annual basis for the following activities:

(1) identification of individuals for job training in the water sector;

(2) counseling, preparation, skills training, and other support to increase a candidate's likelihood of success in a job training program and career;

(3) financial support for individuals in a water sector job skills training program, support services, and transportation assistance tied to training under this Section;

(4) job placement services for individuals during and after completion of water sector job skills training programs; and

(5) financial, administrative, and management assistance for organizations engaged in these activities.

(c) It shall be an annual goal of the Program to train and place at least 300, or 25% of the number of annual jobs created by State financed water infrastructure projects, whichever is greater, of the following persons in water sector-related apprenticeships annually: residents of environmental justice communities; residents of economically and socially disadvantaged communities; those returning from the criminal justice system; foster care alumni; and, in particular, women and transgender persons. In awarding and administering grants under this Program, the Department shall strive to provide assistance equitably throughout the State.

In order to encourage the employment of individuals trained

through the Program onto projects receiving State financial assistance, the Department shall coordinate with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, the Illinois Finance Authority, and other State agencies that provide financial support for water infrastructure projects. These agencies shall take steps to support attaining the training and placement goals set forth in this subsection, using a list of projects that receive State financial support. These agencies may propose and adopt rules to facilitate the attainment of this goal.

Using funds appropriated for the purposes of this Section, the Department may select through a competitive bidding process a Program Administrator to oversee the allocation of funds and select organizations that receive funding.

Recipients of grants under the Program shall report annually to the Department on the success of their efforts and their contribution to reaching the goals of the Program provided in this subsection. The Department shall compile this information and annually report to the General Assembly on the Program, including, but not limited to, the following information:

(1) progress toward the goals stated in this subsection;

(2) any increase in the percentage of water industry jobs in targeted populations;

(3) any increase in the rate of acceptance, completion,

or retention of water training programs among targeted populations;

(4) any increase in the rate of employment, including hours and annual income, measured against pre-Program participant income; and

(5) any recommendations for future changes to optimize the success of the Program.

(d) Within 90 days after the effective date of this amendatory Act of the 101st General Assembly, the Department shall propose a draft plan to implement this Section for public comment. The Department shall allow a minimum of 60 days for public comment on the plan, including one or more public hearings, if requested. The Department shall finalize the plan within 180 days of the effective date of this amendatory Act of the 101st General Assembly.

The Department may propose and adopt any rules necessary for the implementation of the Program and to ensure compliance with this Section.

(e) The Water Workforce Development Fund is created as a special fund in the State treasury. The Fund shall receive moneys appropriated for the purpose of this Section from the Build Illinois Bond Fund, the Capital Development Fund, the General Revenue Fund and any other funds. Moneys in the Fund shall only be used to fund the Program and to assist and enable implementation of clean water infrastructure capital investments. Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, the

Water Workforce Development Fund is not subject to sweeps, administrative charge-backs, or any other fiscal or budgetary maneuver that would in any way transfer any amounts from the Water Workforce Development Fund into any other fund of the State.

(f) For purpose of this Section:

"Environmental justice community" has the meaning provided in subsection (b) of Section 1-50 of the Illinois Power Agency Act.

"Multi-craft labor organization" means a joint labor-management apprenticeship program registered with and approved by the United States Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship or a labor organization that has an accredited training program through the Higher Learning Commission or the Illinois Community College Board.

"Organization" means a corporation, company, partnership, association, society, order, labor organization, or individual or aggregation of individuals.

Section 10. The State Finance Act is amended by adding Section 5.891 as follows:

(30 ILCS 105/5.891 new)

Sec. 5.891. The Water Workforce Development Fund.