

Second Regular Session
Seventy-third General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. 22-0892.01 Jacob Baus x2173

SENATE BILL 22-192

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Zenzinger and Simpson,

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Esgar and Catlin,

Senate Committees

Education

House Committees

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 **CONCERNING THE CREATION OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR CREDENTIAL**
102 **ATTAINMENT, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, MAKING AN**
103 **APPROPRIATION.**

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov>.)

Section 2 of the bill requires:

- The department of higher education (department), in consultation with the state institutions of higher education (institutions), to develop and implement a process that encourages institutions to identify incremental

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing statute.
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.

- achievements on the path to degree completion, organize stackable credentials, and identify how credentials may become stacked into stackable credential pathways;
- The department to facilitate the creation of stackable credential pathways for at least 3 growing industries by January 1, 2024, and at least 2 more growing industries by January 1, 2025; and
- The general assembly to appropriate one million dollars to the department from the workers, employers, and workforce centers cash fund for the 2022-23 fiscal year.

Section 3 of the bill requires the department to allocate and disburse funds to community and technical colleges and local district colleges to fund student access to nondegree credential programs. The general assembly is required to appropriate \$1.8 million to the department for this purpose for the 2022-23 fiscal year.

Section 4 of the bill requires the general assembly to appropriate \$800,000 to the department of education for the adult education and literacy grant program for the 2022-23 fiscal year.

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1. Legislative declaration.** (1) The general assembly
3 finds and declares that:

4 (a) The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the existing gaps
5 between workers with postsecondary education and those with a high
6 school diploma or less;

7 (b) Colorado's unemployment rate is consistently higher for adults
8 without a high school diploma, industry credential, higher education
9 credential or degree, or apprenticeship;

10 (c) The support of Colorado adults and youth in attaining a
11 credential of value is a key strategy for people to earn a job that pays a
12 living wage, and may accelerate the economic recovery from the
13 COVID-19 pandemic;

14 (d) The expansion of nondegree credentials aligned to
15 postsecondary education programs may provide opportunities for workers

1 to upskill and reskill in high-wage, in-demand jobs;
2 (e) Credentials are increasingly earned by individuals in various
3 stages and settings of their lives and careers, including high school;
4 postsecondary institutions; trade and occupational schools; on-the-job,
5 work-based learning; apprenticeships; and self-study; and

6 (f) Nondegree credentials may be combined with postsecondary
7 programs to create stackable credential pathways that facilitate career and
8 professional advancement when aligned with growing and high-demand
9 industries.

10 (2) Therefore, the general assembly declares that the COVID-19
11 pandemic has generated broad workforce disruption and that programs
12 and services described in this act are necessary for providing better
13 opportunities for economic advancement, such as higher wages and more
14 opportunities for career and educational advancement.

15 (3) The general assembly further declares that the programs and
16 services described in this act are important government services.

17 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 23-5-145.6 as
18 follows:

19 **23-5-145.6. Opportunities for credential attainment - fund -**
20 **report - definitions - repeal.** (1) AS USED IN THIS SECTION, UNLESS THE
21 CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

22 (a) "APPRENTICESHIP CERTIFICATE" MEANS VERIFICATION OF
23 COMPLETION OF AN APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM. APPRENTICESHIP
24 CERTIFICATES ARE APPLICABLE TO INDUSTRY TRADES AND PROFESSIONS.

25 (b) "COLORADO TALENT REPORT" MEANS THE REPORT PREPARED
26 PURSUANT TO SECTION 24-46.3-103.

27 (c) "COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION" OR "COMMISSION" HAS

1 THE SAME MEANING AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 23-1-101.1 (1).

2 (d) "DEPARTMENT" MEANS THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER
3 EDUCATION CREATED AND EXISTING PURSUANT TO SECTION 24-1-114.

4 (e) "GUARANTEED-TRANSFER PATHWAYS" OR "GT PATHWAYS"
5 MEANS THE STATEWIDE ARTICULATION MATRIX SYSTEM OF COMMON
6 COURSE NUMBERING FOR GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES DESCRIBED IN
7 SECTION 23-1-108.5 (3)(c).

8 (f) "INDUSTRY CERTIFICATION" MEANS A CREDENTIAL AWARDED
9 BY AN INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED THIRD-PARTY OR INDUSTRY-GOVERNING
10 BOARD BASED ON AN INDIVIDUAL DEMONSTRATING BY ASSESSMENT THAT
11 THE INDIVIDUAL HAS ACQUIRED THE DESIGNATED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS,
12 AND ABILITIES TO PERFORM A SPECIFIC OCCUPATION OR SKILL. INDUSTRY
13 CERTIFICATIONS MAY BE TIME-LIMITED DEPENDENT UPON THE
14 OCCUPATION OR INDUSTRY.

15 (g) "NONDEGREE CREDENTIAL" MEANS A POSTSECONDARY
16 CERTIFICATE, APPRENTICESHIP CERTIFICATE, PROFESSIONAL LICENSE, OR
17 INDUSTRY CERTIFICATION.

18 (h) "POSTSECONDARY CERTIFICATE" MEANS A CREDENTIAL
19 AWARDED BY AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AT AN
20 UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL BASED ON COMPLETION OF ALL REQUIREMENTS
21 FOR A PROGRAM OF STUDY, INCLUDING COURSE WORK AND EXAMS.
22 POSTSECONDARY CERTIFICATES ARE NOT TIME-LIMITED AND DO NOT
23 REQUIRE RENEWAL. "POSTSECONDARY CERTIFICATE" DOES NOT INCLUDE
24 A DEGREE AND DOES NOT INCLUDE A CREDENTIAL AWARDED BY AN
25 INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AFTER COMPLETION OF A BACHELOR'S
26 DEGREE IN THE SAME PATHWAY.

27 (i) "STACKABLE CREDENTIAL PATHWAY" MEANS A SEQUENCE OF

1 CREDENTIALS EARNED THROUGH VARIOUS MEANS, INCLUDING THROUGH
2 ASSESSMENT OF PRIOR LEARNING, THAT MAY BE ACCUMULATED OVER
3 TIME AND MOVE AN INDIVIDUAL ALONG A CAREER PATHWAY OR UP A
4 CAREER LADDER.

5 (j) "STATE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION" OR "INSTITUTION"
6 HAS THE SAME MEANING AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 23-1-135 (2).

7 (k) "STATEWIDE DEGREE TRANSFER AGREEMENT" MEANS A
8 STATEWIDE DEGREE TRANSFER AGREEMENT DESCRIBED IN SECTION
9 23-1-108 (7).

10 (2) BY JUNE 15, 2023, THE DEPARTMENT, IN CONSULTATION WITH
11 INSTITUTIONS, SHALL DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A PROCESS THAT
12 ENCOURAGES INSTITUTIONS TO IDENTIFY INCREMENTAL ACHIEVEMENTS
13 ON THE PATH TO DEGREE COMPLETION, AND ORGANIZE STACKABLE
14 CREDENTIALS THAT BUILD UPON EACH OTHER TOWARD DEGREES AND MAY
15 ARTICULATE TO PATHWAYS IN HIGH-DEMAND INDUSTRIES. THE
16 DEPARTMENT AND INSTITUTIONS SHALL COLLABORATE TO IDENTIFY HOW
17 CREDENTIALS MAY BE EVALUATED FOR THEIR COMPONENT SKILLS,
18 COMPETENCIES, AND LEARNING OUTCOMES, AND THEN MAY BECOME
19 STACKED INTO A STACKABLE CREDENTIAL PATHWAY TO PROVIDE
20 INCREASED ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT AND MAY RESULT IN A DEGREE. AS
21 A PART OF THE PROCESS, THE DEPARTMENT AND INSTITUTIONS SHALL:

22 (a) EVALUATE THE QUALITY OF NONDEGREE CREDENTIALS USING
23 A FRAMEWORK CREATED BY THE DEPARTMENT IN COLLABORATION WITH
24 INSTITUTIONS AND INFORMED BY ONE OR MORE QUALITY STANDARDS
25 FRAMEWORKS DEVELOPED BY NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, AND EVALUATE
26 ACCESS TO NONDEGREE AND DEGREE CREDENTIALS THAT ARE CURRENTLY
27 AVAILABLE THAT LEAD TO IN-DEMAND LIVING WAGE JOBS IDENTIFIED IN

1 THE MOST RECENT COLORADO TALENT REPORT AND RESPOND TO CRITICAL
2 JOB SHORTAGES IN COLORADO;

3 (b) (I) IDENTIFY WHERE ALIGNMENT CURRENTLY EXISTS ALONG A
4 DEGREE PATHWAY BETWEEN NONDEGREE AND DEGREE CREDENTIALS AND
5 WORK-BASED LEARNING AND APPRENTICESHIPS; AND

6 (II) IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP WHERE FURTHER
7 ALIGNMENT MAY BE CREATED BETWEEN NONDEGREE AND DEGREE
8 CREDENTIALS, AND WORK-BASED LEARNING AND APPRENTICESHIPS; AND

9 (c) ARTICULATE WHERE THE VARIOUS ALIGNMENTS IDENTIFIED IN
10 SUBSECTION (1)(b) OF THIS SECTION MAY INCORPORATE INTO STACKABLE
11 CREDENTIAL PATHWAYS THAT MAY LEAD TO A DEGREE AND
12 OPPORTUNITIES FOR CREDITS TO BE TRANSFERRED IN ORDER FOR PERSONS
13 TO BE ABLE TO ATTAIN NONDEGREE OR DEGREE CREDENTIALS THAT LEAD
14 TO IN-DEMAND OR LIVING WAGE JOBS.

15 (3) BY JANUARY 1, 2024, THE DEPARTMENT, IN CONSULTATION
16 WITH THE REPRESENTATIVES DESCRIBED IN SECTION 23-5-145.5 (5), SHALL
17 FACILITATE THE CREATION OF STACKABLE CREDENTIAL PATHWAYS FOR AT
18 LEAST THREE GROWING INDUSTRIES IDENTIFIED BY THE MOST RECENT
19 COLORADO TALENT REPORT. BY JANUARY 1, 2025, THE DEPARTMENT, IN
20 CONSULTATION WITH THE REPRESENTATIVES DESCRIBED IN SECTION
21 23-5-145.5 (5), SHALL FACILITATE THE CREATION OF STACKABLE
22 CREDENTIAL PATHWAYS FOR AT LEAST TWO ADDITIONAL GROWING
23 INDUSTRIES IDENTIFIED BY THE MOST RECENT COLORADO TALENT REPORT.

24 THE DEPARTMENT SHALL FACILITATE THE CREATION OF AT LEAST TWO
25 STACKABLE CREDENTIAL PATHWAYS FOR EACH INDUSTRY. THE
26 STACKABLE CREDENTIAL PATHWAYS MUST INCLUDE:

27 (a) A COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK THAT ARTICULATES THE

1 KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, LEARNING OUTCOMES, NONDEGREE CREDENTIALS,
2 AND DEGREES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PATHWAY, AND IDENTIFIES THE
3 CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES ASSOCIATED
4 WITH THE PATHWAY;

5 (b) AN INVENTORY OF CREDENTIALS THAT ARE A PART OF THE
6 PATHWAY, OFFERED BY ACCREDITED AND NON-ACCREDITED PROVIDERS,
7 INCLUDING TRAINING AND INDUSTRY CREDENTIAL PROVIDERS, HIGH
8 SCHOOLS, PROGRAMS RECOGNIZED BY THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT
9 SUCCESS PROGRAM PURSUANT TO SECTION 22-54-138, POSTSECONDARY
10 INSTITUTIONS, AND NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS;

11 (c) CREDENTIALS THAT ARE A PART OF THE PATHWAY EVALUATED
12 PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-5-145.5 (3), INCLUDING CREDIT AWARDED FOR
13 COURSES IN GT PATHWAYS OR A STATEWIDE DEGREE TRANSFER
14 AGREEMENT; AND

15 (d) CREDITS THAT ARE AWARDED FOR OTHER COURSES WITH A
16 CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION FOCUS IN A POSTSECONDARY
17 DEGREE, NON-CREDIT PROGRAM, OR INDUSTRY CERTIFICATION PROGRAM.

18 (4) THE STACKABLE CREDENTIAL PATHWAYS MUST BE APPROVED
19 BY THE COMMISSION, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE COLORADO WORK
20 FORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL.

21 (5) (a) THE CREDENTIALS TO SUPPORT COLORADO JOBS CASH
22 FUND, REFERRED TO IN THIS SECTION AS THE "FUND", IS CREATED IN THE
23 STATE TREASURY. THE FUND CONSISTS OF MONEY CREDITED TO THE FUND
24 PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (5)(b) OF THIS SECTION AND ANY OTHER
25 MONEY THAT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATES OR TRANSFERS TO
26 THE FUND.

27 (b) FOR THE 2022-23 STATE FISCAL YEAR, THE GENERAL

1 ASSEMBLY SHALL APPROPRIATE ONE MILLION DOLLARS TO THE
2 DEPARTMENT FROM THE WORKERS, EMPLOYERS, AND WORKFORCE
3 CENTERS CASH FUND CREATED IN SECTION 24-75-231. THE DEPARTMENT
4 SHALL USE THIS APPROPRIATION FOR THE PURPOSES DESCRIBED IN THIS
5 SECTION.

6 (c) THE STATE TREASURER SHALL CREDIT ALL INTEREST AND
7 INCOME DERIVED FROM THE DEPOSIT AND INVESTMENT OF MONEY IN THE
8 FUND TO THE FUND.

9 (d) MONEY IN THE FUND IS CONTINUOUSLY APPROPRIATED TO THE
10 FUND FOR THE PURPOSES DESCRIBED IN THIS SECTION.

11 (6) THE DEPARTMENT AND ANY PERSON WHO RECEIVES MONEY
12 FROM THE DEPARTMENT SHALL COMPLY WITH THE COMPLIANCE,
13 REPORTING, RECORD-KEEPING, AND PROGRAM EVALUATION
14 REQUIREMENTS ESTABLISHED BY THE OFFICE OF STATE PLANNING AND
15 BUDGETING AND THE STATE CONTROLLER IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION
16 24-75-226 (5).

17 (7) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 29, 2023, AND ON OR BEFORE
18 DECEMBER 31, 2025, THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION SHALL
19 SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE AND
20 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, OR ANY SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES,
21 REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS SECTION. THE REPORT MUST
22 INCLUDE DATA COLLECTED BY INSTITUTIONS TO MEASURE THE TOTAL
23 NUMBER OF CREDITS, CREDENTIALS, CERTIFICATES, AND PROFESSIONAL
24 LICENSES EARNED IN EACH PATHWAY AT EACH INSTITUTION, AS
25 PRACTICABLE. THE REPORT MUST INCLUDE THE DATA FOR THE STATE AS
26 A WHOLE AND FOR EACH INSTITUTION, IN TOTAL AND DISAGGREGATED BY
27 RACE, ETHNICITY, AND GENDER.

(8) THIS SECTION IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026.

2 **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 23-5-145.7 as
3 follows:

23-5-145.7. Funding for nondegree credential programs - duty

5 **- policy - appropriation - report - definitions - repeal.** (1) AS USED IN
6 THIS SECTION, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

(a) "APPRENTICESHIP CERTIFICATE" MEANS VERIFICATION OF
COMPLETION OF AN APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM. APPRENTICESHIP
CERTIFICATES ARE APPLICABLE TO INDUSTRY TRADES AND PROFESSIONS.

10 (b) "COLORADO TALENT REPORT" MEANS THE REPORT PREPARED
11 PURSUANT TO SECTION 24-46.3-103.

12 (c) "COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION" OR "COMMISSION" HAS
13 THE SAME MEANING AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 23-1-101.1 (1).

14 (d) "COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE" MEANS THE
15 COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGES DESCRIBED IN SECTION 23-60-205.

16 (e) "DEPARTMENT" MEANS THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER
17 EDUCATION CREATED AND EXISTING PURSUANT TO SECTION 24-1-114.

25 (g) "LOCAL DISTRICT COLLEGE" HAS THE SAME MEANING AS
26 DEFINED IN SECTION 23-71-102 (1).

27 (h) "NONDEGREE CREDENTIAL" MEANS A POSTSECONDARY

1 CERTIFICATE, APPRENTICESHIP CERTIFICATE, PROFESSIONAL LICENSE, OR
2 INDUSTRY CERTIFICATION.

3 (i) "POSTSECONDARY CERTIFICATE" MEANS A CREDENTIAL
4 AWARDED BY AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AT AN
5 UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL BASED ON COMPLETION OF ALL REQUIREMENTS
6 FOR A PROGRAM OF STUDY, INCLUDING COURSE WORK AND EXAMS.
7 POSTSECONDARY CERTIFICATES ARE NOT TIME-LIMITED AND DO NOT
8 REQUIRE RENEWAL. "POSTSECONDARY CERTIFICATE" DOES NOT INCLUDE
9 A DEGREE AND DOES NOT INCLUDE A CREDENTIAL AWARDED BY AN
10 INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AFTER COMPLETION OF A BACHELOR'S
11 DEGREE IN THE SAME PATHWAY.

12 (2) SUBJECT TO THE APPROPRIATION IN SUBSECTION (6) OF THIS
13 SECTION, THE COMMISSION SHALL ALLOCATE AND DISBURSE FUNDS TO
14 COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGES AND LOCAL DISTRICT COLLEGES
15 TO FUND STUDENT ACCESS TO NONDEGREE CREDENTIAL PROGRAMS.

16 (3) THE COMMISSION SHALL CREATE A POLICY CONCERNING THE
17 ALLOCATION AND DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS. THE POLICY MUST PRIORITIZE
18 FUNDING NONDEGREE CREDENTIAL PROGRAMS THAT:

19 (a) ARE PART OF AN INDUSTRY-ALIGNED PATHWAY;
20 (b) ARE ASSOCIATED WITH INDUSTRIES IDENTIFIED IN THE MOST
21 RECENT COLORADO TALENT REPORT;
22 (c) ARE STACKABLE IN ALIGNMENT WITH SECTION 23-5-145.6; AND
23 (d) ADDRESS CRITICAL JOB SHORTAGES IN COLORADO.

24 (4) ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1, 2023, EACH COMMUNITY AND
25 TECHNICAL COLLEGE OR LOCAL DISTRICT COLLEGE THAT RECEIVES
26 FUNDING PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION SHALL SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE
27 DEPARTMENT. AT A MINIMUM, THE REPORT MUST INCLUDE DATA TO

1 MEASURE THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CREDENTIALS EARNED AND SUBSEQUENT
2 PLACEMENTS IN JOBS THAT ARE RESPONSIVE TO WORKFORCE DEMANDS
3 PURSUANT TO THE NONDEGREE CREDENTIAL PROGRAM. THE REPORT MUST
4 INCLUDE THE DATA FOR THE STATE AS A WHOLE AND FOR EACH RECIPIENT,
5 IN TOTAL AND DISAGGREGATED BY RACE, ETHNICITY, AND GENDER.

6 (5) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 5, 2024, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL
7 SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEES OF THE SENATE AND
8 THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, OR ANY SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES,
9 REGARDING THE FUNDING ALLOCATED AND DISTRIBUTED PURSUANT TO
10 THIS SECTION. AT A MINIMUM, THE REPORT MUST SUMMARIZE THE
11 INFORMATION PROVIDED TO THE DEPARTMENT PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION
12 (4) OF THIS SECTION.

13 (6) FOR THE 2022-23 STATE FISCAL YEAR, THE GENERAL
14 ASSEMBLY SHALL APPROPRIATE ONE MILLION EIGHT HUNDRED THOUSAND
15 DOLLARS TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION. THE
16 DEPARTMENT SHALL NOT USE MORE THAN THREE PERCENT OF THE
17 APPROPRIATION TO ADMINISTER THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SECTION.

18 (7) THIS SECTION IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2024.

19 **SECTION 4. Appropriation.** For the 2022-23 state fiscal year,
20 \$800,000 is appropriated to the department of education. This
21 appropriation is from the general fund. The department may use this
22 appropriation for the adult education and literacy grant program.

23 **SECTION 5. Safety clause.** The general assembly hereby finds,
24 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate
25 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety.