



General Assembly

**Substitute Bill No. 1375**

*January Session, 2001*

**AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE CONNECTICUT EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING CONNECTICUT'S INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Not later than January 1, 2002, the Connecticut  
2 Employment and Training Commission within the Office of Workforce  
3 Competitiveness shall submit a report to the select committee of the  
4 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to workforce  
5 development, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the  
6 general statutes, making specific recommendations for:

7 (1) Forming a state-wide digital compact encompassing industry,  
8 education, labor and government to integrate industry-driven  
9 information technology skills development in a practical manner  
10 across the entire educational and workforce systems;

11 (2) Funding and operating the Digital Strategic Fund created  
12 pursuant to section 2 of this act for the purpose of providing  
13 discretionary funding to strengthen program efforts to improve  
14 connections between industry groups and specific educational and  
15 training institutions; and

16 (3) Addressing the digital divide in this state by directing moneys in  
17 the Digital Strategic Fund created pursuant to section 2 of this act to

18 specific groups and communities that are traditionally  
19 underrepresented in the information technology fueled economy.

20 Sec. 2. The sum of one million dollars is appropriated to the Office  
21 of Workforce Competitiveness, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2002,  
22 which shall be used by the office for the purpose of establishing a  
23 Digital Strategic Fund that will provide funding for educational and  
24 industry initiatives that address Connecticut's workforce needs as they  
25 relate to information technology and electronic commerce.

26 Sec. 3. (NEW) Not later than January 1, 2002, the Department of  
27 Economic and Community Development, in consultation with the  
28 Office of Workforce Competitiveness, shall, within available  
29 appropriations, coordinate a state-wide campaign designed to increase  
30 the visibility of Connecticut's leading electronic business strengths and  
31 new or emerging information technology businesses.

32 Sec. 4. (NEW) (a) Within available appropriations for the fiscal year  
33 ending June 30, 2002, and the next two successive fiscal years, the  
34 Department of Education, in cooperation with the Office of Workforce  
35 Competitiveness, shall establish a pilot program that is designed to  
36 encourage students in kindergarten to grade twelve, inclusive, to  
37 pursue careers in information technology.

38 (b) Not later than ninety days after the effective date of this section,  
39 the Commissioner of Education, in cooperation with the Office of  
40 Workforce Competitiveness, shall establish written participation  
41 guidelines for the pilot program authorized under this section, and  
42 shall submit such guidelines to the Connecticut Employment and  
43 Training Commission.

44 (c) Not later than January 1, 2002, the Commissioner of Education  
45 shall submit a status report on the establishment and on any operation  
46 of the pilot program authorized under this section to the Connecticut  
47 Employment and Training Commission, the joint standing committees  
48 of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to  
49 appropriations and education and to the select committee of the

50 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to workforce  
51 development.

52 Sec. 5. (NEW) (a) Within available appropriations for the fiscal years  
53 ending June 30, 2002, and June 30, 2003, the Department of Higher  
54 Education shall establish a two-year pilot program that is designed to  
55 encourage public and private institutions of higher education in this  
56 state to provide matriculating college students of any discipline with  
57 the opportunity to demonstrate to prospective employers their  
58 technology proficiency and problem-solving skills within the  
59 technology environment by allowing such students to prepare for and  
60 take an assessment examination, such as the Tek.Xam, at such  
61 institutions.

62 (b) Not later than ninety days after the effective date of this section,  
63 the Commissioner of Higher Education, in consultation with the Board  
64 of Trustees of The University of Connecticut, the Community-  
65 Technical Colleges and the Connecticut State University System and at  
66 least three independent institutions of higher education in this state,  
67 shall establish written participation guidelines for the pilot program  
68 authorized under this section.

69 (c) Not later than January 1, 2002, the Commissioner of Higher  
70 Education shall submit a status report on the establishment and on any  
71 operation of the pilot program authorized under this section to the  
72 joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance  
73 of matters relating to appropriations and education and to the select  
74 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
75 relating to workforce development.

76 Sec. 6. (NEW) (a) Within available appropriations for the fiscal year  
77 ending June 30, 2002, the Department of Higher Education, in  
78 cooperation with the Board of Trustees of The University of  
79 Connecticut, the Community-Technical Colleges and the Connecticut  
80 State University System, shall establish a pilot program that is  
81 designed to assist noninformation technology workers who

82 demonstrate an aptitude in information technology to earn an  
83 information technology credential or degree at one of the constituent  
84 units of the state system of higher education.

85 (b) Not later than ninety days after the effective date of this section,  
86 the Commissioner of Higher Education, in cooperation with the Board  
87 of Trustees of The University of Connecticut, the Community-  
88 Technical Colleges and the Connecticut State University System, shall  
89 establish written participation guidelines for the pilot program  
90 authorized under this section, and shall submit such guidelines to the  
91 Office of Workforce Competitiveness.

92 (c) Not later than January 1, 2002, the Commissioner of Higher  
93 Education shall submit a status report on the establishment and on any  
94 operation of the pilot program authorized under this section to the  
95 Connecticut Employment and Training Commission, the joint standing  
96 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
97 relating to appropriations and education and to the select committee of  
98 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to  
99 workforce development.

100 Sec. 7. (NEW) (a) The Office of Workforce Competitiveness, the  
101 Labor Commissioner, the Commissioners of Economic and  
102 Community Development, Education and Social Services, the  
103 Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management and the Chancellor  
104 of the regional community-technical colleges, in consultation with the  
105 superintendent of the vocational-technical school system and one  
106 member of industry representing each of the economic clusters  
107 identified by the Commissioner of Economic and Community  
108 Development pursuant to section 32-4g of the general statutes shall (1)  
109 review, evaluate and, as necessary, recommend improvements for  
110 certification and degree programs offered by the vocational-technical  
111 school system and the community-technical college system to ensure  
112 that such programs meet the employment needs of business and  
113 industry, and (2) develop strategies to strengthen the linkage between  
114 skill standards for education and training and the employment needs

115 of business and industry.

116 (b) Not later than January 1, 2002, and annually thereafter, the  
117 Commissioner of Education shall report, in accordance with section 11-  
118 4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of the  
119 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education,  
120 commerce and labor and to the select committee of the General  
121 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to workforce  
122 development on (1) the implementation of any recommended  
123 programs or strategies within the vocational-technical school system or  
124 the community-technical college system to strengthen the linkage  
125 between vocational-technical and community-technical college  
126 certification and degree programs and the employment needs of  
127 business and industry, and (2) any certification or degree programs  
128 offered by vocational-technical colleges or community-technical  
129 colleges that do not meet current industry standards.

130 Sec. 8. (NEW) (a) Within available appropriations from the Digital  
131 Strategic Fund created pursuant to section 2 of this act, the Department  
132 of Higher Education, in cooperation with the Board of Trustees of The  
133 University of Connecticut, the Community-Technical Colleges and the  
134 Connecticut State University System, shall establish a pilot program  
135 that is designed to provide information technology related internship  
136 and cooperative work-study programs at the constituent units of the  
137 state system of higher education.

138 (b) Not later than ninety days after the effective date of this section,  
139 the Commissioner of Higher Education, in cooperation with the Board  
140 of Trustees of The University of Connecticut, the Community-  
141 Technical Colleges and the Connecticut State University System, shall  
142 establish written participation guidelines for the pilot program  
143 authorized under this section, and shall submit such guidelines to the  
144 Office of Workforce Competitiveness.

145 (c) Not later than January 1, 2002, the Commissioner of Education  
146 shall submit a status report on the establishment and on any operation

147 of the pilot program authorized under this section to the Connecticut  
148 Employment and Training Commission, the joint standing committees  
149 of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to  
150 appropriations and education and to the select committee of the  
151 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to workforce  
152 development.

153       Sec. 9. Within available appropriations for the fiscal year ending  
154 June 30, 2002, the Department of Education shall create at least three  
155 additional interdistrict magnet school programs with special emphasis  
156 on information technology curriculum, one of which shall be an  
157 elementary school, one of which shall be a middle school and one of  
158 which shall be a high school.

159       Sec. 10. This act shall take effect July 1, 2001.

**WFD**

**JOINT FAVORABLE SUBST. C/R**

**ED**