



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  
3 Workforce Competitiveness, shall submit a report to the select  
4 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
5 relating to workforce development, in accordance with the provisions  
6 of section 11-4a of the general statutes, making specific  
7 recommendations for:

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

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

17 (3) Addressing the digital divide in this state by directing moneys in

18 the Digital Strategic Fund created pursuant to section 2 of this act to  
19 specific groups and communities that are traditionally  
20 underrepresented in the information technology fueled economy.

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

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

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

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

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

50 appropriations and education and to the select committee of the  
51 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to workforce  
52 development.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

115 skill standards for education and training and the employment needs  
116 of business and industry.

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

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

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

146 (c) Not later than January 1, 2002, the Commissioner of Education

147 shall submit a status report on the establishment and on any operation  
148 of the pilot program authorized under this section to the Connecticut  
149 Employment and Training Commission, the joint standing committees  
150 of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to  
151 appropriations and education and to the select committee of the  
152 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to workforce  
153 development.

154       Sec. 9. The Department of Education shall encourage the creation of  
155 additional interdistrict magnet school programs with special emphasis  
156 on information technology curriculum.

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

<b>WFD</b>	<i>Joint Favorable Subst. C/R</i>	ED
<b>ED</b>	<i>Joint Favorable Subst. C/R</i>	APP