



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 a Digital Strategic Fund for the purpose  
13 of providing discretionary funding to strengthen program efforts to  
14 improve connections between industry groups and specific  
15 educational and training institutions; and

16 (3) Addressing the digital divide in this state by directing moneys in  
17 a Digital Strategic Fund to specific groups and communities that are

18 traditionally underrepresented in the information technology fueled  
19 economy.

20       Sec. 2. (NEW) Not later than January 1, 2002, the Department of  
21 Economic and Community Development, in consultation with the  
22 Office of Workforce Competitiveness, shall, within available  
23 appropriations, coordinate a state-wide campaign designed to increase  
24 the visibility of Connecticut's leading electronic business strengths and  
25 new or emerging information technology businesses.

26       Sec. 3. (NEW) (a) Within available appropriations for the fiscal year  
27 ending June 30, 2002, and the next two successive fiscal years, the  
28 Department of Education, in cooperation with the Office of Workforce  
29 Competitiveness, shall establish a pilot program that is designed to  
30 encourage students in kindergarten to grade twelve, inclusive, to  
31 pursue careers in information technology.

32       (b) Not later than ninety days after the effective date of this section,  
33 the Commissioner of Education, in cooperation with the Office of  
34 Workforce Competitiveness, shall establish written participation  
35 guidelines for the pilot program authorized under this section, and  
36 shall submit such guidelines to the Connecticut Employment and  
37 Training Commission.

38       (c) Not later than January 1, 2002, the Commissioner of Education  
39 shall submit a status report in accordance with the provisions of  
40 section 11-4a of the general statutes on the establishment and on any  
41 operation of the pilot program authorized under this section to the  
42 Connecticut Employment and Training Commission, the joint standing  
43 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
44 relating to appropriations and education and to the select committee of  
45 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to  
46 workforce development.

47       Sec. 4. (NEW) (a) Within available appropriations for the fiscal years  
48 ending June 30, 2002, and June 30, 2003, the Department of Higher  
49 Education shall establish a two-year pilot program that is designed to

50 encourage public and private institutions of higher education in this  
51 state to provide matriculating college students of any discipline with  
52 the opportunity to demonstrate to prospective employers their  
53 technology proficiency and problem-solving skills within the  
54 technology environment by allowing such students to prepare for and  
55 take an assessment examination, such as the Tek.Xam, at such  
56 institutions.

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

64 (c) Not later than January 1, 2002, the Commissioner of Higher  
65 Education shall submit a status report in accordance with the  
66 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes on the establishment  
67 and on any operation of the pilot program authorized under this  
68 section to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly  
69 having cognizance of matters relating to appropriations and education  
70 and to the select committee of the General Assembly having  
71 cognizance of matters relating to workforce development.

72 Sec. 5. (NEW) (a) Within available appropriations for the fiscal year  
73 ending June 30, 2002, the Department of Higher Education, in  
74 cooperation with the Board of Trustees of The University of  
75 Connecticut, the Community-Technical Colleges and the Connecticut  
76 State University System, shall establish a pilot program that is  
77 designed to assist noninformation technology workers who  
78 demonstrate an aptitude in information technology to earn an  
79 information technology credential or degree at one of the constituent  
80 units of the state system of higher education.

81 (b) Not later than ninety days after the effective date of this section,

82 the Commissioner of Higher Education, in cooperation with the Board  
83 of Trustees of The University of Connecticut, the Community-  
84 Technical Colleges and the Connecticut State University System, shall  
85 establish written participation guidelines for the pilot program  
86 authorized under this section, and shall submit such guidelines to the  
87 Office of Workforce Competitiveness.

88 (c) Not later than January 1, 2002, the Commissioner of Higher  
89 Education shall submit a status report in accordance with the  
90 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes on the establishment  
91 and on any operation of the pilot program authorized under this  
92 section to the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission, the  
93 joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance  
94 of matters relating to appropriations and education and to the select  
95 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
96 relating to workforce development.

97 Sec. 6. (NEW) (a) The Office of Workforce Competitiveness, the  
98 Labor Commissioner, the Commissioners of Economic and  
99 Community Development, Education and Social Services, the  
100 Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management and the Chancellor  
101 of the regional community-technical colleges, in consultation with the  
102 superintendent of the vocational-technical school system and one  
103 member of industry representing each of the economic clusters  
104 identified by the Commissioner of Economic and Community  
105 Development pursuant to section 32-4g of the general statutes shall (1)  
106 review, evaluate and, as necessary, recommend improvements for  
107 certification and degree programs offered by the vocational-technical  
108 school system and the community-technical college system to ensure  
109 that such programs meet the employment needs of business and  
110 industry, and (2) develop strategies to strengthen the linkage between  
111 skill standards for education and training and the employment needs  
112 of business and industry.

113 (b) Not later than January 1, 2002, and annually thereafter, the  
114 Commissioner of Education shall report, in accordance with section 11-

115 4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committees of the  
116 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education,  
117 commerce and labor and to the select committee of the General  
118 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to workforce  
119 development on (1) the implementation of any recommended  
120 programs or strategies within the vocational-technical school system or  
121 the community-technical college system to strengthen the linkage  
122 between vocational-technical and community-technical college  
123 certification and degree programs and the employment needs of  
124 business and industry, and (2) any certification or degree programs  
125 offered by vocational-technical colleges or community-technical  
126 colleges that do not meet current industry standards.

127       Sec. 7. (NEW) (a) Within available appropriations, the Department  
128 of Higher Education, in cooperation with the Board of Trustees of The  
129 University of Connecticut, the Community-Technical Colleges and the  
130 Connecticut State University System, shall establish a pilot program  
131 that is designed to provide information technology related internship  
132 and cooperative work-study programs at the constituent units of the  
133 state system of higher education.

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

141       (c) Not later than January 1, 2002, the Commissioner of Higher  
142 Education shall submit a status report in accordance with the  
143 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes on the establishment  
144 and on any operation of the pilot program authorized under this  
145 section to the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission, the  
146 joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance  
147 of matters relating to appropriations and education and to the select

148 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
149 relating to workforce development.

150 Sec. 8. The Department of Education shall encourage the creation of  
151 additional interdistrict magnet school programs with special emphasis  
152 on information technology curriculum.

153 Sec. 9. 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
<b>APP</b>	<i>Joint Favorable Subst.</i>	
<b>CE</b>	<i>Joint Favorable</i>	