AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN ADULT LITERACY BOARD.

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

Section 1. (NEW) (Effective July 1, 2008) As used in sections 1 to 7, inclusive, of this act:

1. "Board" means the Adult Literacy Leadership Board;

2. "Adult literacy programs" and "adult literacy services" means services aimed at improving the ability of persons sixteen years of age or over who are not enrolled in secondary school to read, write and speak in English, compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual and in society;

3. "Adult education" means a program established pursuant to sections 10-67, 10-69 to 10-71a, inclusive, and 10-73a to 10-73c, inclusive, of the general statutes;

4. "Vision statement" means a written projected overview of the state's adult literacy programs and services at a specified future date; and

5. "Mission statement" means a written declaration of the purpose of the state's adult literacy programs and services, including elements that address the goals of helping adults develop the reading, critical
thinking, problem solving skills and communication skills they need to be self-sufficient, active citizens, effective parents and qualified, competitive workers.

Sec. 2. (NEW) (Effective July 1, 2008) (a) There is established the Adult Literacy Leadership Board, within the Office of Workforce Competitiveness. The board shall consist of ten voting members and nine ex-officio nonvoting members.

(1) The voting members shall be appointed as follows: (A) Four appointed by the Governor, (i) one of whom shall be a director of a local adult education program, (ii) one of whom shall be a director of a regional adult education program, (iii) one of whom represents a public library, and (iv) one of whom represents a business that has employees who lack basic literacy skills or proficiency in the English language; (B) one appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives who represents a regional workforce development board; (C) one appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate who represents organized labor; (D) one appointed by the majority leader of the House of Representatives who represents a voluntary literacy organization; (E) one appointed by the majority leader of the Senate who represents an adult literacy advocacy group; (F) one appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives who shall represent the interests of persons receiving adult literacy services provided by the community-technical colleges; and (G) one appointed by the minority leader of the Senate who represents a community organization that operates an adult literacy program.

(2) The ex-officio nonvoting members shall consist of the following members, or their designees: The Commissioners of Correction, Education, Higher Education, Economic and Community Development and Social Services, the Labor Commissioner, the director of the Office of Workforce Competitiveness, the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management and the chancellor of the regional community-technical colleges.
(3) The voting members shall serve for a term of four years. The members of the commission shall serve without compensation but shall, within the limits of available funds, be reimbursed for expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of their duties.

(b) The Governor shall appoint the chairperson of the board from among its voting members. The board may create other positions it deems necessary and may fill such positions from among its members. The powers of the board shall be vested in and exercised by not less than five members of the board. Five members of the board shall constitute a quorum. The board may solicit and receive funds from any public or private sources to carry out its activities.

(c) The board shall terminate on July 1, 2012.

Sec. 3. (NEW) (Effective July 1, 2008) The Adult Literacy Leadership Board shall:

(1) Create vision and mission statements by January 1, 2009;

(2) Develop and update a three-year strategic plan, in accordance with section 4 of this act;

(3) Report recommendations annually to the Governor and General Assembly for sources and levels of funding to meet the goals and objectives outlined in the strategic plan, in accordance with section 4 of this act;

(4) Establish performance measures for the adult literacy system and use them to track progress toward the goals and objectives outlined in the strategic plan;

(5) Develop and maintain an online centralized inventory of all adult literacy programs and services offered in the state that includes a description of the type of service, the time and place it is offered and any eligibility requirements or fees;

(6) Establish standards for adult literacy service providers,
including requirements for waiting lists;

(7) Require each adult literacy service provider in the state to maintain a waiting list and report the information to the board, in accordance with standards the board establishes;

(8) Promote coordination and collaboration of delivery of adult literacy programs and services through regionalized service delivery and community partnerships; and

(9) Prepare an annual state report card on the status of adult literacy in this state, in accordance with section 5 of this act.

Sec. 4. (NEW) (Effective July 1, 2008) (a) On or before January 1, 2009, the board shall develop a three-year strategic plan for an adult literacy system in this state.

(b) The strategic plan shall: (1) Include goals for an adult literacy system including a goal of reducing by a certain percentage each year over a specified period of time the number of adults in this state who lack a high school diploma or proficiency in the English language; (2) define the roles of all adult literacy service providers in the state, examining in particular, (A) governance responsibility for adult education, (B) discrepancies in service delivery and ways to promote regionalized service delivery and community partnerships, and (C) resources for system-wide administration, management, research and coordination; (3) include priorities for services that (A) improve the quality of instruction, (B) improve access and retention, and (C) identify target populations for services; (4) include an analysis of funding requirements of all adult literacy services, identifying (A) estimated resources needed to implement the plan’s goals, (B) current sources of funding and possibilities for reallocation, and (C) potential alternatives and new sources of funding; and (5) outline funding policies that provide (A) financial support and incentives to support collaborative delivery of services, and (B) adequate resources for state-funded agencies with adult literacy responsibilities, including public libraries, to carry out data collection, analysis, evaluation and research.
related to program effectiveness and best practices.

(c) The board shall designate regional planning workgroups consisting of representatives of adult literacy service providers and persons receiving adult literacy services to assist in developing and reviewing the strategic plan for adult literacy. The board shall review annually the implementation of the strategic plan and make any necessary revisions. The board shall update the strategic plan every three years.

Sec. 5. (NEW) (Effective July 1, 2008) The state report card, prepared pursuant to subdivision (9) of section 3 of this act, shall provide information on the status of adult literacy in the state. The report card shall identify each major component of the adult literacy system, including, but not limited to, adult education, family literacy and workplace literacy, and provide for each component: (1) The number and demographics of persons served, (2) a description of sources of funding, and (3) performance measures for adult literacy services.

Sec. 6. (NEW) (Effective July 1, 2008) On or before January 1, 2009, and annually thereafter, the board shall report, in accordance with section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the Governor and to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the judiciary, education, higher education, economic and community development, labor and human services on (1) the progress made in developing and implementing the strategic plan, (2) recommendations for sources and levels of funding to meet the goals outlined in the strategic plan, and (3) the report card prepared pursuant to subdivision (9) of section 3 of this act.

Sec. 7. (NEW) (Effective July 1, 2008) The board may request other state agencies, including, but not limited to, the Departments of Education, Higher Education, Economic and Community Development and Social Services, the Labor Department, the Office of Workforce Competitiveness and the Board of Trustees of the Community-Technical Colleges to provide information, reports and
other assistance in carrying out its duties.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

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