SENATE DOCKET, NO. 1849 FILED ON: 1/20/2023

SENATE . . . . . No. 839

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Michael O. Moore

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act assisting low-income students success through work-study.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	
Michael O. Moore	*Second Worcester*	
Brian M. Ashe	*2nd Hampden*	*6/8/2023*

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SENATE . . . . . No. 839

By Mr. Moore, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 839) of Michael O. Moore for legislation to assist low-income students success through work-study. Higher Education.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE SENATE, NO. *852* OF 2021-2022.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)

An Act assisting low-income students success through work-study.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. To provide for the cost of creating a career pathways work-study trust fund and community college staff positions for the purposes of supporting the work of the trust fund established in section 5. The sums set forth in section 2 are hereby appropriated subject to the laws regulating the disbursement of public funds for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022. These sums shall be in addition to any amounts previously appropriated and made available for the purposes of those items. These sums shall be made available until June 30, 2023.

SECTION 2. Chapter 15A of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 22A the following section: -

Section 22B. (a) Subject to appropriation, Bunker Hill Community College shall support education opportunity coordinator positions, through its entity, the Massachusetts Association of

Community Colleges. The coordinators shall work with low-income students, including recipients of cash assistance through transitional aid to families with dependent children, who enroll in community colleges across the state for the purpose of earning a certificate or two-year degree. Each community college shall have at least 1 on-campus coordinator. Coordinators shall provide focused assistance to recipients, including but not limited to developing career plans, identifying a program of study, accessing financial aid and work study, and helping obtain other supports such as childcare and transportation assistance. The coordinators shall work with recipients, community colleges, and case managers at the department of transitional assistance and other state agencies. Bunker Hill Community College, through its entity, the Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges, shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with the community colleges to ensure coordinators execute the duties of this paragraph.

(b) Bunker Hill Community College, through its entity, the Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges, in collaboration with relevant state agencies, shall annually file a report with the chairs of the joint committee on higher education, the joint committee on children, families, and persons with disabilities, and the house and senate committees on ways and means that shall include, but not be limited to:- (1) information regarding the efficacy of community college placements in developing careers for recipients of cash assistance; (2) the number of recipients enrolled in certificate or two-year degree programs at community colleges; (3) the number of recipients enrolled in a certificate or two-year degree program receiving grants under the Massachusetts Community College Career Pathways Trust Fund established in section 2DDDDD of chapter 29; (4) student success rates of recipients enrolled in a certificate or two-year degree program; (5) employment rates of former recipients 6 months after completing a degree or certificate program; and (6) employment rates of former recipients 1 year after

completing a degree or certificate program. No personal identifying information shall be used in the report. The first report shall be filed on or before August 1 two years after said Massachusetts Community College Career Pathways Trust Fund is established and annually, on or before August 1, after that.

SECTION 4. Paragraph (B) of section 2 of chapter 18 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018 Official Edition, is hereby amended by adding the following clause: -

(t) take all necessary actions, including connecting individuals with education opportunity coordinators established in section 22B of chapter 15A, to ensure that individuals receiving cash assistance through transitional aid to families with dependent children may engage in community college programs where assessment shows their chances of achieving long-term careers will improve.

SECTION 5. Chapter 29 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 2QQQQQ the following section: -

2RRRRR. (a) There is hereby established and set up on the books of the commonwealth a separate fund to be known as the Massachusetts Community College Career Pathways Trust Fund, hereinafter referred to as the fund, to which shall be credited any appropriations, bond proceeds or other monies authorized by the general court and specifically designated to be credited thereto. Bunker Hill Community College, hereinafter referred to as the college, shall hold the fund in an account or accounts separate from other funds or accounts; provided, that the fund shall be administered by the Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges. Amounts credited to the fund shall be used by the college to carry out the purposes of the fund as set forth

in this section. Any monies unexpended at the end of the fiscal year shall remain in the fund and may be expended by the college without further appropriation.

(b) The fund shall be used to provide and fund state work-study employment opportunities for eligible low-income students enrolled in a certificate or two-year associate degree program at any community college. Preference shall be given to recipients of cash assistance through transitional aid to families with dependent children.

(c) Funds expended shall, to the greatest extent feasible, be for jobs at: (1) the community college; (2) an off-campus placement that provides career development opportunities that are related to the student's course of study; or (3) an off-campus community service placement as defined in subsection (e).

(d) The share from funds distributed shall not exceed 80 percent of the total compensation paid to students, with the exception of jobs at the community college the student attends, or that provide career development opportunities related to the student's course of study. Employers shall pay the costs of any employee benefits, including all payments due as an employer's contribution under the state workman's compensation laws, federal Social Security laws, and other applicable laws. The federal work-study program shall not be used to provide the employer's share of student compensation.

(e) An off-campus community service placement shall include direct service planning, career development or applied research that is designed to improve the quality of life for residents of the community served, particularly low-income residents, in such fields as health care, child care, education, literacy training, welfare, social services, public safety, crime prevention and control, transportation, recreation, housing and neighborhood improvement, rural

development, and community improvement. Placements shall be identified by the Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges through formal or informal consultation with local nonprofit, governmental, and community-based organizations.

The placement shall not be at an organization for whom a substantial portion of its mission is political activities, including but not limited to electing candidates, influencing ballot questions, and raising money for political campaigns.

(f) Students shall be paid the rate of pay as compared to entry-level salaries and wages provided other employees engaged in similar work, provided total applicant resources shall be considered to ensure to the maximum extent feasible that students may remain qualified for other federal and state public assistance programs. The office may make reasonable adjustments to salaries and wages to maximize a student's participation in other federal and state public assistance programs.

(g) Funds shall not be expended under the program to compensate students for hours worked in excess of an average of 15 hours per week over the period of enrollment or 40 hours per week during vacation period. A student shall not be concurrently employed in the same position by the fund and the federal work-study program and exceed the 15 hours per week average.

(h) Students may receive academic credit for work experience gained through fund jobs.

(i) Monies received from the Massachusetts Community College Career Pathways Trust Fund established in section 2DDDDD of chapter 29 of the General Laws shall not count against a recipient's income, assets, or any other eligibility standard in qualifying for cash assistance benefits.

(j) The college and the department of higher education, hereinafter referred to as the department, shall enter a memorandum of understanding to ensure that funds are properly expended and disbursed. The college shall enter into agreements with employers, community colleges, the department of transitional assistance, and others for the operation of the fund. These agreements shall include such provisions as the office may deem necessary or appropriate to carry out the purposes of this section. These agreements shall be made available to the department upon request.