

SENATE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Brendan P. Crighton

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 incentivizing the awarding of industry-recognized credentials.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Brendan P. Crighton

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

Third Essex

SENATE No.

[Pin Slip]

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 564 OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)**

An Act incentivizing the awarding of industry-recognized credentials.

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

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 69 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 official edition, is
2 hereby amended by adding the following new section:-

3 Section 37. (a) Subject to appropriation, the department of elementary and secondary
4 education shall pay each school district a certification award calculated as follows:

5 (i) \$1,000 for each student in the district who earns an industry-recognized certification
6 for an occupation that has high employment value, as determined by the executive office of labor
7 and workforce development through the publication of the annual list required of it pursuant to
8 Chapter 23, section 26 of the General Laws as amended by Chapter 179 of the Acts of 2022, or
9 earns an industry recognized certification that is recognized by any public institution of higher
10 learning in the commonwealth as a basis for academic credit in such institution.

11 (ii) \$800 for each student in the district who earns an industry-recognized certification
12 that does not meet the criteria of the previous paragraph but addresses regional demands
13 identified by the local MassHire Workforce Board.

14 (b) Subject to appropriation, the department may consider paying each school district a
15 certification award of \$1,000 for each student who completes a cooperative education program as
16 defined in Chapter 74, section 1 of the General Laws or other substantial work-based learning
17 experience, such as an internship or apprenticeship, that the department determines is equivalent
18 to having earned an industry-recognized certification of high employment value.

19 (c) The school district receiving a certification award must allocate at least 80% of
20 any certification award to the school whose students obtained the qualified certifications
21 described in subsections (a) and (b). The allocation may not be used to supplant funds otherwise
22 provided for the basic operation of the school. The school receiving a certification award must
23 use the award to support or maintain the program, including the payment of stipends for
24 instructors and the subsidization of fees for low income students to obtain the certification.

25 (d) Subject to appropriation, the department may pay a certification development award
26 to a school district to support the development of programs to assist students in obtaining
27 industry-recognized certifications described in subsection (a). School districts may use a
28 certification development award to develop instructors able to prepare students to obtain
29 certification, to obtain equipment and other instructional materials to be used for such
30 preparation, or any other purpose directly related to developing programs to assist students in
31 obtaining a qualifying certification.

32 (e) The department shall each year prepare an annual report on the progress made under
33 this section including:

34 (i) The number of public school students who are seeking certifications for high demand
35 occupations, identifying the number of such students who are low-income, ELL and/or SPED.

36 (ii) The certifications earned by such students, including the number of each such
37 certifications earned.

38 (iii) An analysis of the extent, if any, to which the funding provided for the program
39 during the year was insufficient to make the awards under this section.

40 SECTION 2. Section 1 of this act will take effect immediately upon its passage.