Overview

This bill establishes a health care and human services worker training program, administered by the jobs skills partnership board, to alleviate worker shortages in these fields. The board would award grants to consortia, made up of local employers and colleges, to provide tuition waivers for current and potential employees and to aid in curriculum restructuring in the targeted fields. There is a local match requirement for the grants, and consortia are required to develop incentives to aid in worker recruitment and retention.

1 Job skills partnership program. Adds administration of the worker training and retention program to the duties of the job skills partnership program.

2 Definitions.
   Subd. 1. Scope. Explains the application of the definitions.
   Subd. 2. Eligible employer. Includes nursing facilities, small rural hospitals, intermediate care facilities for persons with mental retardation, waivered service providers, home health services providers, personal care assistant services providers, semi-independent living services providers, day training and habilitation services providers, and similar providers of health care or human services.
   Subd. 3. Potential employee target groups. Includes current health care and human services workers, high school students, past and present MFIP recipients, immigrants, senior citizens, and the underemployed or unemployed.
   Subd. 4. Qualifying consortium. Means an entity that includes a public or private nonprofit post-secondary institution and one or more eligible employers, and may include work force centers and counties.

3 Grant Applications.
   Subd. 1. Applications. Provides that a qualifying consortium is to apply to the board in the way the board specifies.
Subd. 2. Fiscal requirements. Requires that the application explain how the consortium will use available federal and state funds to minimize the need for grants. Requires the consortium to designate a lead public agency as the fiscal agent, which could be an educational institution, but not a system governing board.

Subd. 3. Program targets. Requires that applications describe targeted employers or types of employers and the workforce shortage the program will address. Requires verification that the applicant has taken steps to determine that the claimed shortage exists.

Subd. 4. Local match requirements. Requires at least a 50 percent match from local resources for grant money given. For consortia that include a large number of small employers, the local match may be reduced. Provides that in-kind services and expenditures may be used to make the local match. Requires that the grant application specify the contribution to be made by each member of the consortium.

Subd. 5. Ineligible worker categories. Provides that grants cannot be made to address shortages of physicians, physician assistants, or advance practice nurses.

Subd. 6. Evaluation. Requires the board to evaluate the success of grant recipients and report annually to the legislature.

4 Consortia Requirements.

Subd. 1. Recruitment Strategy. Requires a consortium to implement marketing and outreach strategies to recruit people into the health care and human services fields. Requires that the consortium have a screening process to determine whether the potential employee will be disqualified from employment as the result of a background check or otherwise is unlikely to succeed.

Subd. 2. Recruitment and retention incentives. Requires employers in a consortium to provide incentives to train and retain employees, such as payment of a salary during initial training, scholarship programs in which employers deposit money for hours worked, advanced education and other types of skills training to employees, child care subsidies, transportation, and programs to coordinate efforts by employer members to share staff, pool benefit contributions, and coordinate education and training opportunities.

Subd. 3. Work hour limits. Prohibits high school students involved in a training and retention program from working more than 20 hours per week when school is in session.

Subd. 4 Career enhancement requirements. Requires consortium members to cooperate to create a career ladder program under which direct care staff can advance along a career development path.

Subd. 5 Small employer protection. Provides that grantees must guarantee that small employers, including licensed personal care assistant organizations, be allowed to participate in consortium programs. Requires adjustment of a small employer's financial contribution to reflect the employer's financial circumstances.

6 Applicability. Specifies that the implementation of the provisions in the bill shall not be done to circumvent an existing collective bargaining agreement.

7 Appropriation. Appropriates an unspecified amount to the job skills partnership board for the health care and human services worker grants.