

S.F.C.  
*Robert J. Wicker*

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**S.** \_\_\_\_\_

To amend title 46 to establish a grant program for developing, offering, or improving educational or career training programs for American workers related to the maritime workforce.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. WICKER (for himself and Mr. CARDIN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

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**A BILL**

To amend title 46 to establish a grant program for developing, offering, or improving educational or career training programs for American workers related to the maritime workforce.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the "Maritime Techno-  
5 logical Advancement Act of 2021".

1 **SEC. 2. CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE FOR DOMESTIC MARI-**  
2 **TIME WORKFORCE.**

3 Section 51706 of title 46, United States Code, is  
4 amended—

5 (1) in subsection (a), by striking “of Transpor-  
6 tation”;

7 (2) in subsection (b), in the subsection heading,  
8 by striking “ASSISTANCE” and inserting “COOPERA-  
9 TIVE AGREEMENTS”;

10 (3) by redesignating subsection (c) as sub-  
11 section (d);

12 (4) in subsection (d), as redesignated by para-  
13 graph (2), by adding at the end the following:

14 “(3) SECRETARY.—The term ‘Secretary’ means  
15 the Secretary of Transportation.”; and

16 (5) by inserting after subsection (b) the fol-  
17 lowing:

18 “(c) GRANT PROGRAM.—

19 “(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

20 “(A) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ‘Admin-  
21 istrator’ means the Administrator of the Mari-  
22 time Administration.

23 “(B) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term  
24 ‘eligible institution’ means a postsecondary edu-  
25 cational institution (as such term is defined in  
26 section 3 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and

1           Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C.  
2           2302)) that offers a 2-year program of study,  
3           a 1-year program of training, or is a postsec-  
4           ondary vocational institution, and that offers  
5           educational or career training programs for  
6           American workers in the United States mari-  
7           time industry.

8           “(C) UNITED STATES MARITIME INDUS-  
9           TRY.—The term ‘United States maritime indus-  
10          try’ means all segments of the maritime-related  
11          transportation system of the United States,  
12          both in domestic and foreign trade, and in  
13          coastal, offshore, and inland waters, as well as  
14          non-commercial maritime activities, such as  
15          pleasure boating and marine sciences (including  
16          all scientific research vessels), and all of the in-  
17          dustries that support such uses, including vessel  
18          construction and repair, vessel operations, ship  
19          logistics supply, berthing, port operations, port  
20          intermodal operations, marine terminal oper-  
21          ations, vessel design, marine brokerage, marine  
22          insurance, marine financing, chartering, mari-  
23          time-oriented supply chain operations, offshore  
24          industry, and maritime-oriented research and  
25          development.

1           “(2) GRANT AUTHORIZATION.—

2                   “(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year  
3 after the date of enactment of the Maritime  
4 Technological Advancement Act of 2021, the  
5 Administrator may award maritime career  
6 training grants to eligible institutions for the  
7 purpose of developing, offering, or improving  
8 educational or career training programs for  
9 American workers related to the maritime work-  
10 force.

11                   “(B) GUIDELINES.—Not later than 1 year  
12 after the date of enactment of the Maritime  
13 Technological Advancement Act of 2021, the  
14 Administrator shall—

15                           “(i) promulgate guidelines for the  
16 submission of grant proposals under this  
17 subsection; and

18                           “(ii) publish and maintain such guide-  
19 lines on the website of the Maritime Ad-  
20 ministration.

21           “(3) LIMITATIONS.—The Administrator may  
22 not award a grant under this subsection in an  
23 amount that is more than \$20,000,000.

24           “(4) REQUIRED INFORMATION.—

1           “(A) IN GENERAL.—An eligible institution  
2 that desires to receive a grant under this sub-  
3 section shall submit to the Administrator a  
4 grant proposal that includes a detailed descrip-  
5 tion of—

6           “(i) the specific project for which the  
7 grant proposal is submitted, including the  
8 manner in which the grant will be used to  
9 develop, offer, or improve an educational  
10 or career training program that is suited  
11 to maritime industry workers;

12           “(ii) the extent to which the project  
13 for which the grant proposal is submitted  
14 will meet the educational or career training  
15 needs of maritime workers in the commu-  
16 nity served by the eligible institution;

17           “(iii) the extent to which the project  
18 for which the grant proposal is submitted  
19 fits within any overall strategic plan devel-  
20 oped by an eligible community; and

21           “(iv) any previous experience of the  
22 eligible institution in providing maritime  
23 educational or career training programs.

24           “(B) COMMUNITY OUTREACH REQUIRED.—  
25 In order to be considered by the Administrator,

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1 a grant proposal submitted by an eligible insti-  
2 tution under this subsection shall—

3 “(i) demonstrate that the eligible in-  
4 stitution—

5 “(I) reached out to employers to  
6 identify—

7 “(aa) any shortcomings in  
8 existing maritime educational  
9 and career training opportunities  
10 available to workers in the com-  
11 munity; and

12 “(bb) any future employ-  
13 ment opportunities within the  
14 community and the educational  
15 and career training skills re-  
16 quired for workers to meet the  
17 future maritime employment de-  
18 mand; and

19 “(II) reached out to other simi-  
20 larly situated institutions in an effort  
21 to benefit from any best practices that  
22 may be shared with respect to pro-  
23 viding maritime educational or career  
24 training programs to workers eligible  
25 for training; and

1                   “(ii) include a detailed description  
2                   of—

3                   “(I) the extent and outcome of  
4                   the outreach conducted under clause  
5                   (i);

6                   “(II) the extent to which the  
7                   project for which the grant proposal is  
8                   submitted will contribute to meeting  
9                   any shortcomings identified under  
10                  clause (i)(I)(aa) or any maritime edu-  
11                  cational or career training needs iden-  
12                  tified under clause (i)(I)(bb); and

13                  “(III) the extent to which em-  
14                  ployers, including small- and medium-  
15                  sized firms within the community,  
16                  have demonstrated a commitment to  
17                  employing workers who would benefit  
18                  from the project for which the grant  
19                  proposal is submitted.

20                  “(5) CRITERIA FOR AWARD OF GRANTS.—

21                  “(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the appro-  
22                  priation of funds, the Administrator shall award  
23                  a grant under this subsection based on—

24                  “(i) a determination of the merits of  
25                  the grant proposal submitted by the eligi-

1           ble institution to develop, offer, or improve  
2           maritime educational or career training  
3           programs to be made available to workers;

4           “(ii) an evaluation of the likely em-  
5           ployment opportunities available to workers  
6           who complete a maritime educational or  
7           career training program that the eligible  
8           institution proposes to develop, offer, or  
9           improve;

10          “(iii) an evaluation of prior demand  
11          for training programs by workers in the  
12          community served by the eligible institu-  
13          tion, as well as the availability and capac-  
14          ity of existing maritime training programs  
15          to meet future demand for training pro-  
16          grams;

17          “(iv) any prior designation of an insti-  
18          tution as a Center of Excellence for Do-  
19          mestic Maritime Workforce Training and  
20          Education; and

21          “(v) an evaluation of the previous ex-  
22          perience of the eligible institution in pro-  
23          viding maritime educational or career  
24          training programs.



1           “(B) MATCHING REQUIREMENTS.—A  
2 grant awarded under this subsection may not  
3 be used to satisfy any private matching require-  
4 ment under any other provision of law.

5           “(6) COMPETITIVE AWARDS .—

6           “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator  
7 shall award grants under this subsection to eli-  
8 gible institutions on a competitive basis in ac-  
9 cordance with guidelines and requirements es-  
10 tablished by the Administrator under paragraph  
11 (2)(B).

12           “(B) TIMING OF GRANT NOTICE.—The Ad-  
13 ministrator shall post a Notice of Funding Op-  
14 portunity regarding grants awarded under this  
15 subsection not more than 90 days after the date  
16 of enactment of the appropriations Act for the  
17 fiscal year concerned.

18           “(C) TIMING OF GRANTS.—The Adminis-  
19 trator shall award grants under this subsection  
20 not later than 270 days after the date of the  
21 enactment of the appropriations Act for the fis-  
22 cal year concerned.

23           “(D) APPLICATION OF REQUIREMENTS.—  
24 The requirements under subparagraphs (B) and  
25 (C) shall not apply until the guidelines required

1 under paragraph (2)(B) have been promul-  
2 gated.

3 “(E) REUSE OF UNEXPENDED GRANT  
4 FUNDS.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (C),  
5 amounts awarded as a grant under this sub-  
6 section that are not expended by the grantee  
7 shall remain available to the Administrator for  
8 use for grants under this subsection.

9 “(F) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—Not more  
10 than 3 percent of amounts made available to  
11 carry out this subsection may be used for the  
12 necessary costs of grant administration.

13 “(7) ELIGIBLE USES OF GRANT FUNDS.—An el-  
14 igible institution receiving a grant under this sub-  
15 section—

16 “(A) shall carry out activities that are  
17 identified as priorities for the purpose of devel-  
18 oping, offering, or improving educational or ca-  
19 reer training programs for the United States  
20 maritime industry workforce;

21 “(B) shall provide training to upgrade the  
22 skills of the United States maritime industry  
23 workforce, including training to acquire covered  
24 requirements as well as technical skills training

1 for jobs in the United States maritime industry;  
2 and

3 “(C) may use the grant funds to—

4 “(i) admit additional students to mar-  
5 itime training programs;

6 “(ii) expand existing or create new  
7 maritime training programs, including  
8 through partnerships with 4-year institu-  
9 tions of higher education or apprentice-  
10 ships with the United States maritime in-  
11 dustry;

12 “(iii) create new maritime career  
13 pathways;

14 “(iv) expand existing or create new  
15 training programs for transitioning mili-  
16 tary veterans to careers in the United  
17 States maritime industry;

18 “(v) purchase, construct, develop, ex-  
19 pand, or improve training facilities, build-  
20 ings, and equipment to deliver maritime  
21 training programs;

22 “(vi) recruit and train additional fac-  
23 ulty to expand the maritime training pro-  
24 grams offered by the institution;

1           “(vii) provide financial assistance  
2 through scholarships or tuition waivers,  
3 not to exceed the applicable tuition ex-  
4 penses associated with the covered pro-  
5 grams;

6           “(viii) promote the use of distance  
7 learning that enables students to take  
8 courses through the use of teleconfer-  
9 encing, the Internet, and other media tech-  
10 nology;

11           “(ix) assist in providing services to  
12 address maritime workforce recruitment  
13 and training of youth residing in targeted  
14 high-poverty areas within empowerment  
15 zones and enterprise communities;

16           “(x) implement partnerships with na-  
17 tional and regional organizations with spe-  
18 cial expertise in developing, organizing,  
19 and administering maritime workforce re-  
20 cruitment and training services;

21           “(xi) design, develop, and test an  
22 array of approaches to providing recruit-  
23 ment, training, or retention services, to en-  
24 hance diversity, equity and inclusion in the

1 United States maritime industry work-  
2 force;

3 “(xii) in conjunction with employers,  
4 organized labor, other groups (such as  
5 community coalitions), and Federal, State,  
6 or local agencies, design, develop, and test  
7 various training approaches in order to de-  
8 termine effective practices; or

9 “(xiii) assist in the development and  
10 replication of effective service delivery  
11 strategies for the United States maritime  
12 industry as a whole.

13 “(8) PUBLIC REPORT.—Not later than Decem-  
14 ber 15 in each of the calendar years 2023 through  
15 2025, the Administrator shall make available on a  
16 publicly available website a report and provide a  
17 briefing to the Committee on Commerce, Science,  
18 and Transportation of the Senate and the Com-  
19 mittee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the  
20 House of Representatives—

21 “(A) describing each grant awarded under  
22 this subsection during the preceding fiscal year;

23 “(B) assessing the impact of each award of  
24 a grant under this subsection in a fiscal year

1 preceding the fiscal year referred to in subpara-  
2 graph (A) on workers receiving training; and

3 “(C) the performance of the grant awarded  
4 with respect to the indicators of performance  
5 under section 116(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Workforce  
6 Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C.  
7 3141(b)(2)(A)(i)).

8 “(9) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—  
9 There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out  
10 this subsection \$40,000,000 for each of the fiscal  
11 years 2022 through 2026.”