A BILL FOR AN ACT

CONCERNING THE CONTINUATION OF THE "COLORADO VETERANS' SERVICE-TO-CAREER PROGRAM".

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at http://leg.colorado.gov.)

Current law contains a pilot program to assist veterans, veterans' spouses, and other eligible participants in obtaining employment and provide support services to seek and obtain employment. The bill continues the program and includes funding for the current pilot program and the expanded program. The bill adds persons who may participate in the program and addresses veterans who have barriers to employment.
The department is required to develop an evaluation methodology to measure program effectiveness.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. In Colorado Revised Statutes, amend 8-14.3-201 as follows:

8-14.3-201. Short title. The short title of this part 2 is the "Colorado Veterans' Service-to-career Pilot Program".

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, add 8-14.3-201.5 as follows:

8-14.3-201.5. Legislative declaration. (1) The general assembly finds, determines, and declares that:

(a) the pilot program enacted in House Bill 16-1267, which created the Colorado Veterans' Service-to-career Pilot Program that authorized nonprofit agencies to partner with Work Force Centers selected by the department to provide veterans and other eligible participants with skills training, internships, work placements, mentorship opportunities, career and professional counseling, and support services, has been successful in increasing the employment rates for veterans, veterans' spouses, and eligible participants; and

(b) the services offered through the pilot program were designed to enhance work force center services not available under the federal act.

(2) The general assembly further finds, determines, and declares that the Colorado Veterans' Service-to-career Pilot Program should continue as a program whose goal is to assist veterans, spouses, and eligible participants in seeking, obtaining,
AND RETAINING EMPLOYMENT.

SECTION 3. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 8-14.3-202, amend (1), (4), (5), (6), and (9); and add (5.5) as follows:

8-14.3-202. Definitions. As used in this part 2, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1) "Act" means the FEDERAL "Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act", Pub.L. 113-128.

(4) "Eligible participant" means A:

(a) VETERAN;

(b) VETERAN'S SPOUSE;

(c) Veteran's dependent child who is twenty-six years of age or younger and lives in the home of the veteran; and

(d) Veteran's caregiver who is eighteen years of age or older and has significant responsibility for managing the well-being of an injured veteran; AND

(e) PERSON WHO IS ACTIVELY SERVING IN THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES AND WHO IS WITHIN SIX MONTHS OF BEING DISCHARGED UNDER CONDITIONS OTHER THAN DISHONORABLE OR A MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL GUARD OR MILITARY RESERVES WHO HAS COMPLETED INITIAL ENTRY TRAINING.

(5) "Integrated service and support center" means a nonprofit center that is affiliated with a workforce center and veterans service offices or provides financial classes or houses a small business development center CENTRALIZED LOCATION WHERE NONPROFIT AND ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS, GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS COLLABORATE TO PROVIDE TO ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS SERVICES THAT INCLUDE FINANCIAL CLASSES, BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
COUNSELING, WRAP-AROUND SUPPORT SERVICES, SKILLS TRAINING, VETERANS' BENEFIT COUNSELING, PEER MENTORSHIP, COMMUNITY SERVICE, AND HOUSING ASSISTANCE.

(5.5) "INTERNSHIP" MEANS A TRAINING PROGRAM WITH A BUSINESS OR NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION DURING WHICH THE ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANT RECEIVES SKILLS TRAINING THAT COULD RESULT IN FUTURE EMPLOYMENT IN THAT SECTOR OR INDUSTRY.

(6) "Program" means the Colorado veterans' service-to-career pilot program that is designed to enhance work force center services that are not available under the act created in this part 2.

(9) (a) "Work force center" means a work force center created by a work force investment development board pursuant to the "Colorado Work Force Investment Career Advancement Act", part 2 of article 83 of this title 8.

(b) FOR PURPOSES OF A GRANT APPLICATION UNDER SECTION 8-14.3-203, "WORK FORCE CENTER" ALSO INCLUDES A NONPROFIT ENTITY THAT:

(I) HAS A PRIMARY FOCUS OF SERVING VETERANS;

(II) JOINS WITH THE WORK FORCE CENTER TO SUBMIT A JOINT APPLICATION; AND

(III) COLLABORATES WITH STAKEHOLDERS AND, IF FEASIBLE, DEVELOPS A GRANT APPLICATION FORM BY MARCH 1, 2019, SO THAT NONPROFIT AGENCIES THAT OPERATE MULTIPLE SERVICE CENTERS CAN SUBMIT ONE APPLICATION.

SECTION 4. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 8-14.3-203, amend (1) introductory portion, (1)(b), (1)(d), (1)(e), (2), (3)(e), (4), (5), and (6); and add (1)(f) as follows:
8-14.3-203. Colorado veterans' service-to-career program - report. (1) One or more work force centers selected by the department pursuant to the grant program developed by the department in subsection (4) of this section may contract with a nonprofit agency to administer the program. Work force centers selected by the department and the nonprofit agency shall develop and expand programs to provide work force development-related services specifically tailored to the unique needs and talents of veterans, spouses, and eligible participants. The services may include:

(b) Opportunities for apprenticeship or internship placements, including an apprenticeship internship that allows for direct entry of veterans pursuant to 38 U.S.C. sec. 4104A ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS;

(d) Opportunities for work placements with businesses or other organizations; and

(e) Support services, as needed; AND

(f) Wrap-around support services, including housing and transportation, to facilitate employment programs.

(2) (a) If an internship, as allowable, under the act, is not fully funded by the employer, the employer and the work force center shall share the cost of the hourly wage or stipend for the veteran, spouse, or eligible participant, as determined by the work force center and as permitted under state and federal law.

(b) If a veteran, spouse, or eligible participant is eligible for funding, through the act, this funding must be used first. If funding is not available or is limited, under the act or if the use of funds is not allowable, the veteran, spouse, or eligible participant may use program funding.
(3) The work force centers selected by the department and the nonprofit agency are encouraged to additionally provide services that include:

(e) Counseling on educational and skills training opportunities available to veterans, spouses, and eligible participants.

(4) The department shall develop a grant program process so that work force centers may apply for money to administer the program. Each work force center that wishes to administer the grant program must submit a grant application that:

(a) Describes the current services that the work force center offers and demonstrates that those services:

(I) Do not duplicate services currently provided under the federal act; and

(II) Will complement other services offered under the program;

(b) States how the grant money would enable the work force center to expand its services for the purposes of the program;

(c) Describes businesses or other organizations it is partnering with to provide the necessary services; and

(d) Any other requirements deemed necessary by the department.

Explains how the services will be tailored or specifically marketed to any subgroup of eligible participants, including:

(I) Eligible participants with barriers to access, such as veterans with bad conduct discharges;

(II) Veterans experiencing homelessness;

(III) Vietnam-era veterans who served for more than one hundred days between 1965 and 1975;
(IV) **Eligible Participants Experiencing Addiction**;

(V) **National Guard and Military Reserve Veterans**; and

(VI) **Veterans Who Are Not Able to Enroll Under the Federal Act or Who Are Enrolled Under the Federal Act But Could Benefit from Greater Support**; and

(e) **Addresses Any Other Requirements the Department Deems Necessary.**

(5) In selecting work force centers to administer the program, the department shall give preference to a work force center that:

(a) Partners with a nonprofit agency that is an integrated service and support center for veterans and their families;

(b) Is located in the state of Colorado, in order to serve the highest number of **Veterans Eligible Participants**;

(c) Has existing programs or partnerships with businesses or organizations in the community to provide services appropriate to the program; and

(d) Has the capacity to provide a wide range of work force development-related services tailored to the unique needs of **Veterans, Spouses, and Eligible Participants**.

(6)(a) Each work force center chosen to receive a grant shall use the money for direct services to **Veterans, Spouses, and Eligible Participants**. Each work force center chosen to receive a grant shall report on the services offered; **Veteran, Spouse, and Eligible Participant Participation by Each Subgroup of Eligible Participants**; the program's success measured through gainful employment and participation in skills training or educational programs of **Veterans, Spouses, and Eligible Participants;** and any other requirements that the
department deems necessary. Notwithstanding Section 24-1-136 (11)(a)(I), the reports WORK FORCE CENTER shall be made SUBMIT THE REPORT to the department, which shall relay all information from the reports annually to the state, veterans, and military affairs committees of the house of representatives and the senate or to their successor committees.

(b) The department shall develop an evaluation methodology to measure program outcomes and effectiveness prior to initiating the bid process for awarding grants. To the extent feasible, the evaluation process must enable a comparison between programs serving similar populations. It is the intent of the General Assembly that the department award the grants no later than November 1, 2018. The grant award must include data tracking requirements that will be used to measure outcomes and effectiveness.

(c) Any unspent money remaining in the department's fiscal year 2017-18 appropriation for administrative costs may be used for the purpose of designing an evaluation methodology or contracting out the design. Any unspent money for direct program services remaining as of June 30, 2018, may be used by the programs in effect as of June 30, 2018, for the fiscal year starting July 1, 2018. Unspent money available at the end of each fiscal year rolls over to the next fiscal year to be spent in that year.

(d) In analyzing and reporting on the performance data described in subsections (6)(a) and (6)(b) of this section, the department shall separately account for data pertaining to
SIGNIFICANT BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT.

SECTION 5. In Colorado Revised Statutes, amend 8-14.3-204 as follows:

8-14.3-204. Appropriation. (1) For the fiscal year beginning on July 1, 2016, the general assembly may annually appropriate money from the marijuana tax cash fund created in section 39-28.8-501 C.R.S., to the department to be used for the program. The department may use up to five percent of any money appropriated by the general assembly for development and administrative costs incurred by the department pursuant to this section. Up to seven percent of the money may also be used by the work force center for administrative costs incurred by the work force center and the nonprofit agency to implement and operate the program.

(2) From the money appropriated to the program, the general assembly shall appropriate _____ in order to continue the program through December 31, 2018. Any money appropriated to the program must be applied to grants awarded to the program in the fiscal year 2018-19.

SECTION 6. In Colorado Revised Statutes, repeal 8-14.3-205 as follows:

8-14.3-205. Repeal of part. This part is repealed, effective January 1, 2019.

SECTION 7. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 39-28.8-501, amend (2)(b)(IV)(L) as follows:

39-28.8-501. Marijuana tax cash fund - creation - distribution - legislative declaration. (2) (b) (IV) Subject to the limitation in subsection (5) of this section, the general assembly may annually
appropriate any money in the fund for any fiscal year following the fiscal year in which it was received by the state for the following purposes:

(L) For the Colorado veterans’ service-to-career pilot program created in part 2 of article 14.3 of title 8;

SECTION 8. Effective date. This act takes effect July 1, 2018.

SECTION 9. Safety clause. The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.