

Second Regular Session
Seventy-fifth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. 26-0449.01 Anna Petrini x5497

SENATE BILL 26-045

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Liston and Mullica, Baisley, Bright, Carson, Catlin, Frizell, Hinrichsen, Kirkmeyer, Lindstedt, Pelton B., Pelton R., Rich, Roberts, Simpson, Snyder

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Paschal and Winter T.,

Senate Committees

Education

House Committees

A BILL FOR AN ACT
101 **CONCERNING PROMOTING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**
102 **OPPORTUNITIES IN COLORADO'S NUCLEAR SECTOR.**

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>.)

The bill creates the Colorado nuclear workforce development and education council (council) in the Colorado school of mines to help meet growing workforce demand in the nuclear energy sector. The bill establishes a related grant program (grant program) to provide grants to institutions of higher education for the development or expansion of nuclear engineering degree or certificate programs or course offerings.

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing law.
Dashes through the words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law.

The council shall convene advisory sessions with stakeholders from the nuclear, educational, and workforce development sectors; implement the grant program; and contract with one or more third-party entities for staffing and operational assistance.

The council may seek, accept, and expend gifts, grants, and donations for council-related purposes. The state treasurer shall credit the gifts, grants, and donations to the Colorado nuclear workforce development and education cash fund (cash fund), which is created in the bill. The general assembly shall not appropriate general fund money to implement or maintain council operations or grant awards. The council shall convene and begin awarding grants only after the balance of the cash fund reaches or exceeds \$500,000.

The bill imposes requirements to report to the general assembly about the council's funding sources, grant program implementation, and other uses of the grant program money. The bill repeals the council, effective September 1, 2033, unless the council is extended following a sunset review.

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

2 **SECTION 1. Legislative declaration.** (1) The general assembly
3 finds and declares that:

4 (a) Nuclear energy is a critical component of Colorado's clean
5 energy strategy and economic development, offering consistent, reliable,
6 and noncarbon power generation to support grid stability and emissions
7 reduction goals;

8 (b) A highly skilled workforce is essential for the deployment and
9 operation of nuclear technologies. Workforce readiness in engineering,
10 radiation safety, and reactor technology is necessary to support Colorado's
11 energy transition.

12 (c) The Colorado nuclear workforce development and education
13 council will harness private investment, federal funding, and strategic
14 partnerships to make the state a leader in nuclear energy workforce
15 development. Through grants to eligible institutions of higher education
16 and related technical assistance, the council will expand educational

1 pathways to careers in the nuclear energy sector.

2 (d) The Colorado school of mines' expertise in energy resource
3 management, workforce development, and federal grant facilitation
4 uniquely positions it to house the Colorado nuclear workforce
5 development and education council; and

6 (e) By developing and expanding existing state higher education
7 infrastructure, including degree and certificate programs and technical
8 training, and by leveraging public and private sector collaboration, the
9 Colorado nuclear workforce development and education council will help
10 Colorado expand workforce readiness in the nuclear energy sector
11 without new state appropriations, supporting long-term economic growth
12 and clean energy innovation.

13 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** part 3 to article
14 41 of title 23 as follows:

15 **PART 3**

16 **COLORADO NUCLEAR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND**
17 **EDUCATION COUNCIL**

18 **23-41-301. Definitions.**

19 AS USED IN THIS PART 3, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE
20 REQUIRES:

21 (1) "CASH FUND" MEANS THE COLORADO NUCLEAR WORKFORCE
22 DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION CASH FUND CREATED IN SECTION
23 23-41-306.

24 (2) "COAL TRANSITION COMMUNITY" MEANS A COAL TRANSITION
25 COMMUNITY, AS DEFINED IN SECTION 8-83-502.

26 (3) "COUNCIL" MEANS THE COLORADO NUCLEAR WORKFORCE
27 DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION COUNCIL CREATED IN SECTION 23-41-302.

5 (5) "GRANT PROGRAM" MEANS THE COLORADO NUCLEAR
6 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION GRANT PROGRAM CREATED
7 IN SECTION 23-41-304.

12 **23-41-302. Colorado nuclear workforce development and**
13 **education council - created.**

14 (1) THE COLORADO NUCLEAR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND
15 EDUCATION COUNCIL IS CREATED IN THE COLORADO SCHOOL OF MINES.
16 THE PURPOSE OF THE COUNCIL IS TO MEET GROWING WORKFORCE DEMAND
17 IN THE NUCLEAR ENERGY SECTOR BY:

18 (a) PROVIDING GRANTS THROUGH THE GRANT PROGRAM TO
19 ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OR EXPANSION OF DEGREE
20 PROGRAMS, CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS, INDIVIDUAL COURSES, OR MODULAR
21 TRAINING FOCUSED ON NUCLEAR ENERGY; AND

22 (b) PROVIDING ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS WITH RELATED TECHNICAL
23 ASSISTANCE.

8 (4) THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL OR ANY OTHER ENTITY PURSUANT
9 TO THIS PART 3 IS CONTINGENT ON MONEY BEING AVAILABLE TO
10 IMPLEMENT THIS PART 3. IF MONEY IS NOT AVAILABLE FOR THE COUNCIL
11 OR ANY OTHER ENTITY TO CARRY OUT THE DUTIES REQUIRED BY THIS PART
12 3, THE COUNCIL OR ENTITY IS NOT REQUIRED TO CARRY OUT THE DUTIES.
13 A CONTRACT WITH A THIRD-PARTY ENTITY OR ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION MUST
14 PROVIDE THAT THE CONTRACT IS CONTINGENT ON MONEY BEING
15 AVAILABLE FOR THE SPECIFIED PURPOSE AND THE MONEY BEING
16 AVAILABLE FOR THE DURATION OF THE CONTRACT.

17 (5) (a) THE COUNCIL CONSISTS OF MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE
18 DESIGNATED APPOINTING AUTHORITIES AS FOLLOWS:

21 (A) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A REPRESENTATIVE OF A PRIVATE
22 COMPANY IN THE NUCLEAR OR CLEAN ENERGY SECTOR;

23 (B) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A REPRESENTATIVE OF A COAL
24 TRANSITION COMMUNITY OR RURAL AREA OF THE STATE; AND

25 (C) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A PHYSICIST OR ENGINEER FROM A
26 FEDERAL LABORATORY AND WHO HAS AT LEAST FIVE YEARS OF
27 EXPERIENCE IN THE NUCLEAR SECTOR; AND

5 (A) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A REPRESENTATIVE OF A PRIVATE
6 COMPANY IN THE NUCLEAR OR CLEAN ENERGY SECTOR; AND

7 (B) ONE MEMBER WHO IS A REPRESENTATIVE OF A LABOR
8 ORGANIZATION, A REPRESENTATIVE OF A SMALL OR MID-SIZED NUCLEAR
9 SUPPLY CHAIN BUSINESS, AN ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY EXPERT, OR A
10 WORKFORCE TRAINING PROFESSIONAL.

11 (b) A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL MUST BE A COLORADO RESIDENT
12 UNLESS THE MEMBER IS APPOINTED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (5)(a)(I)(C)
13 OF THIS SECTION OR IS A REPRESENTATIVE OF A SMALL OR MID-SIZED
14 NUCLEAR SUPPLY CHAIN BUSINESS OR AN ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY
15 EXPERT APPOINTED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (5)(a)(II)(B) OF THIS
16 SECTION.

17 (c) THE APPOINTING AUTHORITIES SHALL MAKE THE INITIAL
18 APPOINTMENTS TO THE COUNCIL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER THE
19 EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS SECTION BUT NO LATER THAN JANUARY 1, 2027.

20 (d) THE TERM OF APPOINTMENT IS FOUR YEARS; EXCEPT THAT THE
21 TERM OF EACH MEMBER INITIALLY APPOINTED IS TWO YEARS.

22 **23-41-303. Colorado nuclear workforce development and**
23 **education council - meetings - duties - authority to contract.**

24 (1) (a) THE COUNCIL SHALL ELECT A CHAIR FROM AMONG THE
25 COUNCIL'S MEMBERS TO SERVE FOR A TERM NOT TO EXCEED TWO YEARS,
26 AS DETERMINED BY THE COUNCIL.

27 (b) THE PRESIDENT OF THE COLORADO SCHOOL OF MINES SHALL

1 CONVENE THE FIRST MEETING OF THE COUNCIL NO LATER THAN
2 FORTY-TWO DAYS AFTER THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS SECTION.
3 THEREAFTER, THE COUNCIL SHALL MEET AT LEAST QUARTERLY. THE
4 CHAIR MAY CALL ADDITIONAL MEETINGS AS ARE NECESSARY FOR THE
5 COUNCIL TO COMPLETE ITS DUTIES.

6 (2) MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL SERVE WITHOUT COMPENSATION
7 BUT ARE ENTITLED TO RECEIVE REIMBURSEMENT FOR ACTUAL AND
8 NECESSARY EXPENSES INCURRED IN THE PERFORMANCE OF THE MEMBERS'
9 DUTIES ON THE COUNCIL.

10 (3) WITH STAFFING AND OPERATIONAL ASSISTANCE FROM A
11 THIRD-PARTY ENTITY, THE COUNCIL SHALL:

12 (a) CONVENE, AT A FREQUENCY TO BE DETERMINED BY THE
13 COUNCIL, ADVISORY SESSIONS WITH STAKEHOLDERS FROM THE NUCLEAR,
14 EDUCATIONAL, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SECTORS TO ASSESS AND
15 ADOPT STRATEGIES TO RESPOND TO EVOLVING WORKFORCE DEMANDS AND
16 OPPORTUNITIES IN THE NUCLEAR ENERGY SECTOR; AND

17 (b) IMPLEMENT THE GRANT PROGRAM, INCLUDING:

18 (I) REVIEWING AND APPROVING GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES AND
19 PROCEDURES TO ENSURE GRANTS ARE AWARDED THROUGH AN OPEN,
20 COMPETITIVE PROCESS USING NATIONAL BEST PRACTICES;

21 (II) REVIEWING APPLICATIONS FROM ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS;

22 (III) SELECTING GRANT RECIPIENTS AND DETERMINING GRANT
23 AWARD AMOUNTS;

24 (IV) PROVIDING ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS WITH TECHNICAL
25 ASSISTANCE; AND

26 (V) EVALUATING THE GRANT PROGRAM.

27 (4) THE COUNCIL MAY PROMOTE NUCLEAR ENERGY EDUCATION

1 AND RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AMONG ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS TO ENHANCE
2 THE ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS' ABILITY TO ATTRACT FEDERAL AND PRIVATE
3 SECTOR FUNDING FOR NUCLEAR ENERGY EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND
4 RELATED RESEARCH.

5 (5) THE COUNCIL SHALL DEVELOP GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES
6 AS NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT THIS PART 3.

7 (6) THE COUNCIL SHALL CONTRACT WITH ONE OR MORE
8 THIRD-PARTY ENTITIES TO PROVIDE STAFFING AND OPERATIONAL
9 ASSISTANCE TO THE COUNCIL OR TO HELP IMPLEMENT OTHER PROVISIONS
10 OF THIS PART 3.

11 (7) THE COUNCIL MUST USE A REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL PROCESS TO
12 DESIGNATE AND CONTRACT WITH A THIRD-PARTY ENTITY FOR THE
13 PURPOSES OF THIS PART 3. A THIRD-PARTY ENTITY MAY PROVIDE IN-KIND
14 STAFF SUPPORT OR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO ASSIST THE COUNCIL IN
15 PERFORMING THE COUNCIL'S DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES. THIRD-PARTY
16 ENTITY PERSONNEL ARE NOT EMPLOYEES OF THE COUNCIL OR THE STATE.

17 (8) THE COUNCIL MAY USE UP TO TEN PERCENT OF THE MONEY IN
18 THE CASH FUND TO PAY DIRECT AND INDIRECT ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.

19 **23-41-304. Colorado nuclear workforce development and**
20 **education grant program - created - application - criteria - awards.**

21 (1) THE COLORADO NUCLEAR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND
22 EDUCATION GRANT PROGRAM IS CREATED IN THE COLORADO SCHOOL OF
23 MINES TO MEET GROWING WORKFORCE DEMAND IN THE NUCLEAR ENERGY
24 SECTOR BY PROVIDING GRANTS TO ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS FOR THE
25 DEVELOPMENT OR EXPANSION OF NUCLEAR ENERGY DEGREE PROGRAMS,
26 CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS, INDIVIDUAL COURSES, OR MODULAR TRAINING.

27 (2) THE COUNCIL SHALL BEGIN AWARDING GRANTS ONLY AFTER

1 THE BALANCE OF THE CASH FUND REACHES OR EXCEEDS FIVE HUNDRED
2 THOUSAND DOLLARS. THE COUNCIL SHALL EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO
3 LEVERAGE FEDERAL FUNDING, INCLUDING FEDERAL WORKFORCE
4 DEVELOPMENT MATCHING GRANTS.

5 (3) GRANT RECIPIENTS MAY USE THE MONEY RECEIVED THROUGH
6 THE GRANT PROGRAM FOR THE DESIGN OF COURSES OR DEGREE
7 PROGRAMS, CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS, OR TRAINING PROGRAMS FOCUSED
8 ON NUCLEAR ENERGY; FOR PERSONNEL; OR FOR ADMINISTRATIVE OR
9 FACILITY EXPENSES NECESSARY TO DEVELOP OR EXPAND NUCLEAR
10 ENERGY DEGREE, CERTIFICATE, TRAINING, OR COURSE OFFERINGS.

11 (4) THE COUNCIL, WITH ASSISTANCE FROM AND IN COORDINATION
12 WITH A THIRD-PARTY ENTITY, SUBJECT TO THE AVAILABILITY OF MONEY
13 PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (2) OF THIS SECTION, SHALL ADMINISTER THE
14 GRANT PROGRAM AND SHALL AWARD GRANTS AS PROVIDED IN THIS PART
15 3. GRANTS MUST BE PAID OUT OF THE CASH FUND.

16 (5) TO RECEIVE A GRANT, AN ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION MUST SUBMIT
17 AN APPLICATION TO THE COUNCIL IN ACCORDANCE WITH GUIDELINES AND
18 PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-41-303 (5).

19 (6) (a) THE COUNCIL SHALL REVIEW THE APPLICATIONS RECEIVED
20 PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION. IN SELECTING GRANT RECIPIENTS, THE
21 COUNCIL SHALL PRIORITIZE ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS THAT CAN PROVIDE A
22 TRAINED WORKFORCE EXPEDITIOUSLY. IN ADDITION TO OTHER RELEVANT
23 FACTORS, THE COUNCIL SHALL CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA WHEN
24 AWARDING GRANTS:

25 (I) THE DISTRIBUTION OF NUCLEAR ENERGY DEGREE PROGRAMS,
26 CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS, INDIVIDUAL COURSES, AND MODULAR TRAINING
27 OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED ACROSS THE STATE;

6 (b) TO AWARD A GRANT, AT LEAST A MAJORITY OF THE MEMBERS
7 OF THE COUNCIL MUST APPROVE THE GRANT.

8 23-41-305. Reporting requirements.

20 (b) AN ACCOUNTING OF THE SOURCE AND AMOUNT OF MONEY
21 CREDITED TO THE CASH FUND AND HOW CASH FUND MONEY WAS USED
22 PURSUANT TO THIS PART 3, INCLUDING GRANT PROGRAM AWARDS TO
23 EXPAND OR SUPPORT NUCLEAR ENERGY DEGREE PROGRAMS, CERTIFICATE
24 PROGRAMS, INDIVIDUAL COURSES, AND MODULAR TRAINING
25 OPPORTUNITIES IN ORDER TO MEET GROWING WORKFORCE DEMAND IN THE
26 NUCLEAR ENERGY SECTOR

23-41-306. Colorado nuclear workforce development and

1 **education cash fund - created.**

2 (1) THE COLORADO NUCLEAR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND
3 EDUCATION CASH FUND IS CREATED IN THE STATE TREASURY. THE CASH
4 FUND CONSISTS OF GIFTS, GRANTS, AND DONATIONS CREDITED TO THE
5 CASH FUND PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (2) OF THIS SECTION.

6 (2) THE COUNCIL MAY SEEK, ACCEPT, AND EXPEND GIFTS, GRANTS,
7 OR DONATIONS FROM PRIVATE OR PUBLIC SOURCES FOR THE PURPOSES OF
8 THIS PART 3. THE COUNCIL SHALL TRANSMIT ALL MONEY RECEIVED
9 THROUGH GIFTS, GRANTS, OR DONATIONS TO THE STATE TREASURER, WHO
10 SHALL CREDIT THE MONEY TO THE CASH FUND.

11 (3) THE STATE TREASURER SHALL CREDIT ALL INTEREST AND
12 INCOME DERIVED FROM THE DEPOSIT AND INVESTMENT OF MONEY IN THE
13 CASH FUND TO THE CASH FUND.

14 (4) MONEY IN THE CASH FUND IS CONTINUOUSLY APPROPRIATED
15 TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE COLORADO SCHOOL OF MINES FOR THE
16 PURPOSES SPECIFIED IN THIS PART 3.

17 (5) THE COUNCIL MAY ACCEPT DONATIONS OF IN-KIND SERVICES
18 FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS PART 3, INCLUDING FOR TECHNICAL
19 ASSISTANCE.

20 (6) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SHALL NOT APPROPRIATE GENERAL
21 FUND MONEY FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS PART 3.

22 **23-41-307. Effective date - repeal of part - review of functions.**

23 (1) SECTIONS 23-41-303, 23-41-304, AND 23-41-305 TAKE EFFECT
24 IF THE COUNCIL RECEIVES AT LEAST FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS
25 OF GIFTS, GRANTS, OR DONATIONS FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS PART 3. THE
26 PRESIDENT OF THE COLORADO SCHOOL OF MINES SHALL NOTIFY THE
27 REVISOR OF STATUTES IN WRITING OF THE DATE ON WHICH THE CONDITION

1 SPECIFIED IN THIS SUBSECTION (1) HAS OCCURRED BY EMAILING THE
2 NOTICE TO REVISOROFSTATUTES.GA@COLEG.GOV. SECTIONS 23-41-303,
3 23-41-304, AND 23-41-305 TAKE EFFECT UPON THE DATE IDENTIFIED IN
4 THE NOTICE THAT THE COUNCIL HAS RECEIVED AT LEAST FIVE HUNDRED
5 THOUSAND DOLLARS OF GIFTS, GRANTS, OR DONATIONS FOR THE PURPOSES
6 OF THIS PART 3 OR, IF THE NOTICE DOES NOT SPECIFY THAT DATE, UPON
7 THE DATE OF THE NOTICE TO THE REVISOR OF STATUTES.

8 (2) THIS PART 3 IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2033.
9 BEFORE THE REPEAL, THIS PART 3 IS SCHEDULED FOR REVIEW IN
10 ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 24-34-104.

11 **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 24-34-104, **add**
12 (34)(a)(XIV) as follows:

13 **24-34-104. General assembly review of regulatory agencies**
14 **and functions for repeal, continuation, or reestablishment - legislative**
15 **declaration - repeal.**

16 (34) (a) The following agencies, functions, or both, are scheduled
17 for repeal on September 1, 2033:

18 (XIV) THE COLORADO NUCLEAR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND
19 EDUCATION COUNCIL CREATED IN PART 3 OF ARTICLE 41 OF TITLE 23.

20 **SECTION 4. Act subject to petition - effective date.** This act
21 takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the
22 ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly (August
23 12, 2026, if adjournment sine die is on May 13, 2026); except that, if a
24 referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the
25 state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act
26 within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take effect
27 unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in

1 November 2026 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the
2 official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.