



U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
**ENERGY &  
NATURAL RESOURCES**

SENATOR MARIA CANTWELL, *Ranking Member*

@EnergyDems

## **S. 1304, the 21st Century Energy Workforce Act** By Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.)

The energy industry is the third largest industry in the United States, but continues to face a skills gap in hiring qualified workers. According to the most recent Quadrennial Energy Review released by the U.S. Department of Energy, the energy sector will employ an additional 1.5 million workers over the next 15 years.

### ***National Center for Excellence for the 21st Century Workforce***

This legislation would establish a National Center for Excellence for the 21st Century Workforce, a nationwide advisory board for the development of a skilled energy workforce. The Center for Excellence would include representatives from the federal government, the energy industry, labor organizations, state and local government, and both K-12 education and post-secondary education.

This advisory board would support and develop job training programs and standards for career placement in both the traditional and clean energy sectors. It would also work to integrate educational standards and develop essential foundational skills to help in the development of a skilled workforce for the energy sector. Last, this board would support the replication of existing successful energy curricula.

### ***Energy Workforce Pilot Grant Program***

The legislation would create a competitive grant program at the U.S. Department of Energy to provide job training in the energy industry and help students obtain an industry recognized credential. The grant program would be open to public and non-profit organizations that include an advisory board of representatives from labor, industry, and education. Grant applicants must demonstrate experience in job training programs and the ability to provide an industry-recognized credential to students who successfully complete the program.

Priority would be given to applications that: house the job training in a community college, university, or registered apprentice program with foundational science and math courses; works to transition active service members and veterans to careers in the energy industry; includes a regional consortia to leverage best practices; has a state-supported entity in the application; includes an apprenticeship program; develops a mentorship program for elementary and high school students; provides support services and career coaching; and/or provides introductory energy workforce training.

Grants would be limited to \$1 million and would require non-federal matching funds. Applicants would also be required to consult with current federal programs to reduce duplication before submitting an application. The pilot grant program would be authorized at \$20 million a year for fiscal years 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019.

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