

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
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SENATE BILL DRS15428-LRa-178A

Short Title: Protecting Workers in the Age of AI Act. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Batch, Garrett, and Theodros (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO PROTECT WORKERS IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND  
3 TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 SECTION 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Protect Workers in  
6 the Age of AI Act."

7 SECTION 2. Part 3B of Article 10 of Chapter 143B of the General Statutes is  
8 amended by adding a new section to read:

9 "§ 143B-438.14A. Artificial intelligence workforce transition and retraining.

10 (a) There is established within the Department of Commerce the Artificial Intelligence  
11 Workforce Transition Program (Program) and the AI Workforce Transition Fund (Fund).

12 (b) The purpose of the Program is to allocate funding to support workers displaced due  
13 to artificial intelligence or automation. Appropriations from the Fund shall be used for job  
14 retraining, credentialing programs, and workforce education. Funding shall be prioritized for  
15 training programs in health care, advanced manufacturing, infrastructure, and other skilled trades.

16 (c) Employers receiving State economic incentives shall report to the Department layoffs  
17 attributable to automation or artificial intelligence.

18 (d) The Department may engage in partnerships with community colleges, workforce  
19 boards, and apprenticeship programs to carry out the purposes of this section."

20 SECTION 3. G.S. 115D-20 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

21 "(16) To partner with the Department of Commerce to implement the Artificial  
22 Intelligence Workforce Transition Program pursuant to G.S. 143B-438.14A."

23 SECTION 4. Notwithstanding G.S. 115C-562.8 and any other provision of law to  
24 the contrary, the State Education Assistance Authority shall transfer to the Department of  
25 Commerce the sum of fifty million dollars (\$50,000,000) in unencumbered, nonrecurring funds  
26 remaining at the end of the 2025-2026 fiscal year that would otherwise be carried forward in the  
27 2026-2027 fiscal year for the award of opportunity scholarship grants pursuant to  
28 G.S. 115C-562.8(d)(2). These funds are hereby appropriated to the Department of Commerce for  
29 the 2026-2027 fiscal year to establish the AI Workforce Transition Fund created in this act and  
30 to provide grants to community colleges and workforce training providers.

31 SECTION 5. This act becomes effective July 1, 2026.



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