WHEREAS, the Legislature recognizes that modern workforce needs require many employees today and in the future to understand computer sciences and to know computer coding and computer programming; and
WHEREAS, the Legislature recognizes that opportunities for minors to engage in part-time employment to develop the soft skills required to be effective employees continue to decline; and
WHEREAS, the Legislature recognizes that opportunities for employment in high-wage jobs and careers related to computer sciences may be harder to find and participate in from tribal communities across Montana; and
WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that students in tribal communities face additional barriers to entry into computer science-related careers, including significant populations in poverty, a lack of computer science-related opportunities to learn hard skills, and a lack of part-time employment for students to learn soft skills related to being a good employee; and
WHEREAS, a computer coding pilot program would be able to meet the dual needs of part-time employment and exposure and access to vital computer science knowledge, skills, and curriculum.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

NEW SECTION. Section 1. Computer coding student employment pilot program. (1) There is a 2-year computer coding student employment pilot program administered by the department of labor and industry. The purpose of the program is to provide part-time employment to students in tribal communities to complete computer coding and computer programming training.

(2) The department shall develop a pilot program grant application that incorporates the requirements
of subsection (3) and develop criteria to award grant funds to successful applicants. The pilot program must target
Montana tribal communities that face barriers to entry for students into computer science-related employment.

(3) To be eligible for a grant, the grantee shall:

(a) employ Montana students from tribal communities between the ages of 14 and 18 years old and pay
participating students an hourly rate of at least the current Montana minimum hourly wage rate pursuant to
39-3-409;

(b) teach and administer a task-based computer science program that allows participants to move
through the program at individual speeds. The grantee may use an industry-recognized online curriculum or may
develop its own curriculum.

(c) provide information and exposure to computer science-related career and job opportunities, including
the degrees or credentials required to be qualified for various opportunities, locations where the degrees or
credentials may be obtained, and what secondary education coursework would benefit a participant who would
like to pursue a computer science-related career.

(4) A grantee shall prepare a final report documenting the successes, challenges, and overall impressions
of the pilot program and submit the report to the department of labor and industry before the start of the next
regular legislative session.

NEW SECTION. Section 2. Appropriation. There is appropriated $300,000 from the general fund to
the department of labor and industry for the biennium beginning July 1, 2019, for the purposes of the computer
coding student employment pilot program established in [section 1].

NEW SECTION. Section 2. Notification to tribal governments. The secretary of state shall send a
copy of [this act] to each tribal government located on the seven Montana reservations and to the Little Shell
Chippewa tribe.

NEW SECTION. Section 3. Legislative intent. It is the intent of the legislature that the
department of labor and industry implement the provisions of [this act] within existing resources.

NEW SECTION. Section 4. Codification instruction. [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an
integral part of Title 41, chapter 2, and the provisions of Title 41, chapter 2, apply to [section 1].
NEW SECTION. Section 5. Effective date. [This act] is effective on passage and approval.


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