STATE OF NEW YORK

7429

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

October 12, 2021

Introduced by Sens. GOUNARDES, MAY, RYAN -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Rules

AN ACT directing the commissioner of labor to conduct a comprehensive study on immigrant and refugee participation in adult education and the workforce; and providing for the repeal of such provisions upon expiration thereof

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. 1. The commissioner of labor, in consultation with the commissioner of the office of temporary and disability assistance, the commissioner of education, and the New York state office for new Americans (hereinafter referred to as "the commissioners") in conjunction with any other department, division, board, bureau, commission, agency, or public authority of the state or any political subdivision thereof deemed necessary by the commissioners, shall conduct a comprehensive study and prepare a report on immigrant and refugee participation in adult education and the workforce. The data collected shall only be utilized as authorized under state and federal law to inform the state's efforts to advance economic stability and integration for immigrants and refugees. The state shall never use or share the data solely for the use of civil immigration enforcement.

2. The study shall:

(a) identify any barriers that refugees and immigrants face to entering the workforce, including but not limited to licensing, language access, and transportation;

(b) assess participation by and obstacles to refugees and immigrants in adult education and workforce training programs;

(c) compare, to the extent practicable, the current employment of refugees and immigrants to that of their employment prior to resettling in the United States, including any occupational and professional licenses, certifications, credentials and academic degrees earned;

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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(d) identify the top occupations that refugees and immigrants seek to work in and any barriers that prevent them from using work experience and education gained outside of the United States to obtain employment in such occupations; and

(e) identify any other issues the commissioners deem relevant to the purposes of this act.

3. In conducting such study and developing recommendations, the commissioners shall seek the input of relevant governmental and non-governmental stakeholders from across the state, including refugees and immigrants.

4. Not later than one year after the effective date of this act, the commissioners shall prepare and submit to the governor, the temporary president of the senate, and the speaker of the assembly a report of the study's findings, together with specific recommendations for minimizing existing barriers and maximizing opportunities for refugees and immigrants to gain access to education and enter the workforce in New York State.

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately and shall expire and be deemed repealed 2 years after it shall have become a law.