

# SENATE NO. 729

## **AN ACT** ESTABLISHING A HIGHER EDUCATION ASSISTANCE PILOT PROGRAM

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled,  
And by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the Massachusetts Board  
2 of Higher Education (Board), is hereby directed to establish a two year pilot program to promote  
3 student retention and employment partnerships between the Commonwealth's college and  
4 university graduates and the state's business community. The Board shall be directed to establish  
5 rules governing the implementation and administration of the pilot program.

6 SECTION 2. The Board shall choose not more than 5 institutions from the Commonwealth's  
7 public and private colleges and universities to participate in the pilot program; provided further, the  
8 Board, in consultation with the state's Department of Business and Technology, shall choose not  
9 more than 5 business entities in the Commonwealth to participate in this pilot program; provided  
10 further that those business entities may consist of, but not be limited to, employers from the  
11 financial services, life sciences, high technology, health care, and higher education industries;  
12 provided further, the Board shall allow not more than 150 students to participate in the pilot  
13 program; and provided further, only students in good academic standing, who attend a degree  
14 granting collegiate program, and who have obtained more than fifty percent of their credits needed  
15 to graduate shall be eligible to participate in this pilot program.

16 SECTION 3. Business entities selected to participate in the pilot program shall supplement a  
17 percentage of a participating student's tuition & fees and, in agreeing to offer this assistance, shall  
18 receive a 20% state income tax credit on the first \$5,000 of tuition & fees paid by the participating  
19 business entity; provided further, that in exchange for receiving tuition & fee assistance from a

20 participating business entity, graduating students shall agree to work for that business entity for an  
21 agreed upon length of time, which shall not to exceed 24 months; and provided further that in the  
22 event a participating student is unable to perform work for said business entity upon graduation,  
23 that student shall be obligated to refund all or a portion of the financial assistance provided by the  
24 business entity, unless the student's failure to perform is based upon a condition or conditions set  
25 forth by the Board.

26 SECTION 4. Two years after the commencement of the pilot program, the Board shall report to the  
27 legislature's joint committees on ways and means, higher education, and labor & workforce  
28 development, the results of the pilot program and shall recommend it expansion, continuation, or  
29 discontinuation.

30 SECTION 5. The Board is hereby authorized, subject to appropriation, to expend two hundred  
31 thousand dollars for the administration and evaluation of the pilot program.