

SENATE, No. 4577

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
222nd LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED SEPTEMBER 28, 2026

Sponsored by:
Senator JOHN J. BURZICHELLI
District 3 (Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem)

SYNOPSIS

Requires public institutions of higher education to enroll certain students impacted by automation in job training courses without payment of tuition.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT concerning unemployment tuition waivers for displaced
2 workers and amending P.L.1983, c.469 and P.L.1983, c.470.

3
4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

6
7 1. Section 2 of P.L.1983, c.469 (C.18A:64-13.2) is amended to
8 read as follows:

9 2. Each public institution of higher education shall permit a
10 person who has been in the labor market for at least two years and
11 is unemployed or has received a layoff notice as a result of a factory
12 or plant closing or automation to enroll without payment of tuition
13 in a job training course, provided that the person is not eligible for
14 any available State or federal student financial aid and that
15 available classroom space permits and that tuition paying students
16 constitute the minimum number required for the course. Nothing
17 herein shall preclude a public institution of higher education from
18 requiring a registration fee not to exceed \$20.00 per academic term.
19 (cf: P.L.1992, c.45, s.2)

20
21 2. Section 2 of P.L.1983, c.470 (C.18A:64A-23.2) is amended to
22 read as follows:

23 2. Each county college shall permit a person who has been in
24 the labor market for at least two years and is unemployed or has
25 received a layoff notice as a result of a factory or plant closing or
26 automation to enroll without payment of tuition in a job training
27 course, provided that the person is not eligible for any available
28 State or federal student financial aid and that available classroom
29 space permits and that tuition paying students constitute the
30 minimum number required for the course. Nothing herein shall
31 preclude a county college from requiring a registration fee not to
32 exceed \$20.00 per academic term.
33 (cf: P.L.1992, c.45, s.4)

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35 3. This act shall take effect immediately.

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38 STATEMENT

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40 This bill requires public institutions of higher education to enroll
41 certain students impacted by automation in job training courses
42 without payment of tuition.

43 Under current law, each public institution of higher education is
44 required to permit a person who has been in the labor market for at
45 least two years and is unemployed or has received a layoff notice as

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 a result of a factory or plant closing to enroll without payment of
2 tuition in a job training course, provided that the person is not
3 eligible for any available State or federal student financial aid and
4 that available classroom space permits and that tuition paying
5 students constitute the minimum number required for the course.
6 This bill extends this benefit to individuals who lost employment
7 due to automation.

8 According to a 2020 ALICE report from United Way of New
9 Jersey, 84 percent of jobs paying less than \$20 per hour and 42 percent
10 of jobs paying more than \$20 per hour in the State are at high risk of
11 becoming automated, based on data from 2018. The sponsor notes that
12 Ocean County is among the State's counties with the highest rates of
13 these types of jobs, leaving many of the county's residents and
14 families vulnerable to the impact of job loss due to automation.