

## Information Technology Registered Apprenticeship Expansion Discussion Paper

### Background

Registered Apprenticeship (RA) is a training model that can support employers in training new employees or upskilling existing workers. Employers that need to build or enhance their current workforce can choose to develop a new RA program or expand a current RA program. Based on need, an employer can develop training or enhance any classroom training and the on-the-job learning components to increase the efficiencies of their workforce.

Current information from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics anticipates continued job growth in the field of Information Technology (IT). Additionally, software developers and computer occupations remain in the top 10 in-demand occupations in Texas. Microsoft, Computing Technology Industry Association (CompTIA), Cisco, and Linux certifications will be of great value as the Texas economy continues to grow. Industry-based certifications may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Microsoft Technology Associate
  - Server Fundamentals
  - Networking Fundamentals
  - Security Fundamentals
- Computing Technology Industry Association (CompTIA)
  - CompTIA A+
  - CompTIA Network+
  - CompTIA CySA+ (cybersecurity)
  - CompTIA Server+
  - CompTIA Security+
- Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA)
- Linux
  - Server Administrator
  - System Administrator
  - Network Engineer

### Issue

Texas continues to focus on building a highly skilled and well-paid workforce. With IT occupations in demand and projections indicating that the demand will continue, making funding available to the IT industry to cover a portion of training costs will support and promote continued growth of Texas businesses. Additionally, strengthening the Texas workforce by building expertise and increasing the number of IT workers will encourage more companies to move to Texas and in-state companies to grow their current operations. These IT RA programs can provide quality training for individuals and establish career pathways that include the attainment of industry-recognized credentials and continued professional growth in in-demand careers.

Launching the IT Registered Apprenticeship Expansion program will require publication of a request for applications (RFA). Eligible applicants for the program will include the following:

- 1 • Local Workforce Development Boards
- 2 • Community, technical, and state colleges
- 3 • Universities
- 4 • Nonprofit organizations.

5 Eligible participants will be Texas residents who:

- 6 • are age 18 or older;
- 7 • are US citizens or individuals certified to work in the United States; and
- 8 • if male, meet Selective Service requirements.

9 The grantee will be required to:

- 10 • outreach and engage employers who indicate a need for IT-related training;
- 11 • obtain letters from Texas employers in the IT industry who attest to the demand for IT-
- 12 related jobs;
- 13 • develop or expand IT RA programs; and
- 14 • report apprentices who, through their IT RA program, are registered with the US Department
- 15 of Labor.

16 Staff propose that Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds be used for this RA

17 expansion program. The funds will be used for the following activities:

- 18 • To support individuals enrolled in RA programs by providing support services to eligible
- 19 individuals, including tuition, books, supplies, fees, uniforms, tools and other required items
- 20 • To support the cost of the classroom instruction and/or the on-the job training component of
- 21 RA programs

## 22 **Decision Point**

23 Staff seeks direction on publishing an RFA for the IT RA Expansion program using the criteria

24 outlined above to award up to \$4 million in WIOA funding. Through this funding, the program

25 will be positioned to train a minimum of 1,000 eligible participants.