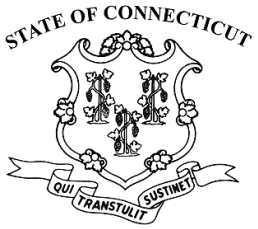

Substitute Senate Bill No. 1179

Public Act No. 25-149

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE CONNECTICUT COMMUNITY MAKERSPACE INITIATIVE PROGRAM.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) (a) For the purposes of this section:

(1) "Financial assistance" means any and all forms of grants, loans or other forms of financing.

(2) "Makerspace" means a community space that (A) provides access to tools, technology or educational materials for entrepreneurs, (B) results in the prototyping, creation, production or assembly of tangible personal property, and (C) supports the development of educational opportunities for personal growth, workforce training and early-stage business ventures.

(b) Not later than January 1, 2026, the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development shall establish and administer a pilot program to provide financial assistance to eligible entities for the establishment or expansion of makerspaces in the state that may serve as models for self-sustaining makerspaces. Such financial assistance shall be used for the costs of such establishment or expansion, including, but not limited to, planning activities, operational costs and capital

expenditures, but shall not be used for the personnel costs of any eligible entity. The commissioner shall (1) establish eligibility criteria and an application process for the program, and (2) explore means of funding such program, including, but not limited to, public-private partnerships, grant programs and federal funds or state funds.

(c) Applications for participation in such pilot program shall be submitted in a form and manner prescribed by the commissioner. Each application shall include, but need not be limited to: (1) A description of the makerspace the applicant is seeking to establish or expand and that may serve as a model for self-sustaining makerspaces; (2) the amount of financial assistance requested by the applicant; and (3) any other information the commissioner deems necessary.

(d) The total amount of financial assistance provided pursuant to the program shall not exceed five million dollars. The total amount of financial assistance provided to an eligible entity shall not exceed two hundred fifty thousand dollars per fiscal year.

(e) The commissioner shall require each entity that receives financial assistance pursuant to the program to submit a report to the commissioner containing information regarding (1) the progress of the establishment or expansion of the makerspace proposed in such entity's application, and (2) any other information the commissioner deems necessary. Each such entity shall submit such report not later than two years after such entity receives financial assistance pursuant to the provisions of this section.

(f) Not later than January 1, 2027, and annually thereafter, the commissioner shall submit a report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, containing an evaluation of the operation and effectiveness of the program to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to commerce.

Sec. 2. Subsection (b) of section 32-235 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

(b) The proceeds of the sale of said bonds, to the extent of the amount stated in subsection (a) of this section, shall be used by the Department of Economic and Community Development (1) for the purposes of sections 32-220 to 32-234, inclusive, including economic cluster-related programs and activities, and for the Connecticut job training finance demonstration program pursuant to sections 32-23uu and 32-23vv, provided (A) three million dollars shall be used by said department solely for the purposes of section 32-23uu, (B) not less than one million dollars shall be used for an educational technology grant to the deployment center program and the nonprofit business consortium deployment center approved pursuant to section 32-41*l*, (C) not less than two million dollars shall be used by said department for the establishment of a pilot program to make grants to businesses in designated areas of the state for construction, renovation or improvement of small manufacturing facilities, provided such grants are matched by the business, a municipality or another financing entity. The Commissioner of Economic and Community Development shall designate areas of the state where manufacturing is a substantial part of the local economy and shall make grants under such pilot program which are likely to produce a significant economic development benefit for the designated area, (D) five million dollars may be used by said department for the manufacturing competitiveness grants program, (E) one million dollars shall be used by said department for the purpose of a grant to the Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology, for the purposes of subdivision (5) of subsection (a) of section 32-7f, (F) fifty million dollars shall be used by said department for the purpose of grants to the United States Department of the Navy, the United States Department of Defense or eligible applicants for projects related to the enhancement of infrastructure for long-term, on-going naval operations

at the United States Naval Submarine Base-New London, located in Groton, which will increase the military value of said base. Such projects shall not be subject to the provisions of sections 4a-60 and 4a-60a, (G) two million dollars shall be used by said department for the purpose of a grant to the Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology, Inc., for manufacturing initiatives, including aerospace and defense, **[**and**]** (H) four million dollars shall be used by said department for the purpose of a grant to companies adversely impacted by the construction at the Quinnipiac Bridge, where such grant may be used to offset the increase in costs of commercial overland transportation of goods or materials brought to the port of New Haven by ship or vessel, and (I) one million dollars shall be used by said department for the purpose of the program established pursuant to section 1 of this act, provided the department may use up to ten per cent of such amount for the costs of administering such program, (2) for the purposes of the small business assistance program established pursuant to section 32-9yy, provided fifteen million dollars shall be deposited in the small business assistance account established pursuant to said section 32-9yy, (3) to deposit twenty million dollars in the small business express assistance account established pursuant to section 32-7h, (4) to deposit four million nine hundred thousand dollars per year in each of the fiscal years ending June 30, 2017, to June 30, 2019, inclusive, and June 30, 2021, and nine million nine hundred thousand dollars in the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, in the CTNext Fund established pursuant to section 32-39i, which shall be used by the Department of Economic and Community Development to provide grants-in-aid to designated innovation places, as defined in section 32-39f, planning grants-in-aid pursuant to section 32-39*l*, and grants-in-aid for projects that network innovation places pursuant to subsection (b) of section 32-39m, provided not more than three million dollars be used for grants-in-aid for such projects, and further provided any portion of any such deposit that remains unexpended in a fiscal year subsequent to the date of such deposit may be used by the Department of Economic and Community Development

for any purpose described in subsection (e) of section 32-39i, (5) to deposit two million dollars per year in each of the fiscal years ending June 30, 2019, to June 30, 2021, inclusive, in the CTNext Fund established pursuant to section 32-39i, which shall be used by the Department of Economic and Community Development for the purpose of providing higher education entrepreneurship grants-in-aid pursuant to section 32-39g, provided any portion of any such deposit that remains unexpended in a fiscal year subsequent to the date of such deposit may be used by the Department of Economic and Community Development for any purpose described in subsection (e) of section 32-39i, (6) for the purpose of funding the costs of the Technology Talent Advisory Committee established pursuant to section 32-7p, provided not more than ten million dollars may be used on or after July 1, 2023, for such purpose, (7) to provide (A) a grant-in-aid to the Connecticut Supplier Connection in an amount equal to two hundred fifty thousand dollars in each of the fiscal years ending June 30, 2017, to June 30, 2021, inclusive, and (B) a grant-in-aid to the Connecticut Procurement Technical Assistance Program in an amount equal to three hundred thousand dollars in each of the fiscal years ending June 30, 2017, to June 30, 2021, inclusive, (8) to deposit four hundred fifty thousand dollars per year, in each of the fiscal years ending June 30, 2017, to June 30, 2021, inclusive, in the CTNext Fund established pursuant to section 32-39i, which shall be used by the Department of Economic and Community Development to provide growth grants-in-aid pursuant to section 32-39g, provided any portion of any such deposit that remains unexpended in a fiscal year subsequent to the date of such deposit may be used by the Department of Economic and Community Development for any purpose described in subsection (e) of section 32-39i, (9) to transfer fifty million dollars to the Labor Department which shall be used by said department for the purpose of funding workforce pipeline programs selected pursuant to section 31-11rr, provided, notwithstanding the provisions of section 31-11rr, (A) not less than five million dollars shall be provided to the workforce development board in Bridgeport serving the southwest region, for

purposes of such program, and the board shall distribute such money in proportion to population and need, and (B) not less than five million dollars shall be provided to the workforce development board in Hartford serving the north central region, for purposes of such program, (10) to transfer twenty million dollars to Connecticut Innovations, Incorporated, provided ten million dollars shall be used by Connecticut Innovations, Incorporated for the purpose of the proof of concept fund established pursuant to subsection (b) of section 32-39x and ten million dollars shall be used by Connecticut Innovations, Incorporated for the purpose of the venture capital fund program established pursuant to section 32-41oo, (11) to provide a grant to The University of Connecticut of eight million dollars for the establishment, development and operation of a center for sustainable aviation pursuant to subsection (a) of section 10a-110o, and (12) for up to twenty million dollars in investments in federally designated opportunity zones through an impact investment firm including, subject to the approval of the Governor, funding from the Economic Assistance Revolving Fund, established pursuant to section 32-231.

Governor's Action:
Approved July 1, 2025