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Legislative Assembly of Commonwealthland

BILL 1

YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP AND INTERNSHIP ACT

An Act to set targets for the reduction of youth unemployment, to establish the Commonwealthland Apprenticeship Fund and to establish the Commonwealthland Internship Initiative

Minister of Social Development

Summary

This enactment provides for the setting of targets for the reduction of youth unemployment. It also provides support for paid apprenticeships and internships for unemployed people between the ages of 16 and 25 years by the establishment of the Commonwealthland Apprenticeship Fund and the Commonwealthland Internship Initiative.

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BILL 1

An Act to set targets for the reduction of youth unemployment, to establish the Commonwealthland Apprenticeship Fund and to establish the Commonwealthland Internship Initiative

Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Commonwealthland, enacts as follows:

Short title

1 This Act may be cited as the *Youth Apprenticeship and Internship Act*.

Interpretation

- 2 (1) In this Act,
- (a) “**Minister**” means the Minister of Social Development;
 - (b) “**participant**” means a youth who is employed
 - (i) as an apprentice in an apprenticeship supported by the Commonwealthland Apprenticeship Fund under section 3, or
 - (ii) as an intern in an internship supported by the Commonwealthland Internship Initiative under section 4;
 - (c) “**placement**” means the placement of a participant for the purpose of an apprenticeship or an internship; and
 - (d) “**youth**” means an individual between the ages of 16 and 25.
- (2) For the purposes of this Act, words in the singular include the plural, and words in the plural include the singular.

Targets for reduction in rates of youth unemployment

- 3 The Minister shall set annual targets for the following:
- (a) the reduction in the percentage of youths who are unemployed;
 - (b) the number of apprenticeships that are to be made available for youths; and
 - (c) the number of internships that are to be made available for youths.

Commonwealthland Apprentice Fund

- 4 (1) The Minister shall establish a Commonwealthland Apprenticeship Fund as an apprenticeship grant program for employers to encourage and promote the availability of apprenticeships to youths.
- (2) To be eligible for a grant under the Commonwealthland Apprenticeship Fund in respect of a participant, an employer is required to:
- (a) demonstrate a commitment to employ the participant for a minimum of 12 months or the time it takes to complete the apprenticeship framework, whichever is greater; and
 - (b) agree to pay the participant at least the prescribed minimum hourly wage.

Commonwealthland Internship Initiative

- 5 (1) The Minister shall establish a Commonwealthland Internship Initiative as an internship grant program for employers to encourage and promote the availability of internships to youths.
- (2) To be eligible for a grant under the Commonwealthland Internship Initiative in respect of a participant, an employer is required to:
- (a) demonstrate a commitment to employ the participant for a minimum of 12 months or the time it takes to complete the internship program, whichever is greater; and
 - (b) agree to pay the participant at least the prescribed minimum hourly wage.

Preference in placements

- 6 Preference may be made in placements for unemployed youths
- (a) living in extreme poverty;
 - (b) whose education has been affected by conflict;
 - (c) living in rural areas;
 - (d) with disabilities; or
 - (e) who are female.

Youth employment information services to be provided

- 7 (1) The Minister shall establish a dedicated telephone helpline, staffed by trained employees with a full knowledge of relevant youth employment programs, for employers wishing to offer employment, training and work experience to youths.
- (2) The Minister shall establish a ministerial internet site to provide online information for employers and to youths about relevant youth employment programs.
- (3) The Minister may promote relevant youth employment programs, which promotion may include advertising or using social networking sites.

Non-attendance and failure to complete placements

- 8 (1) Participants are required to meet targets set by the Minister for attendance and training.
- (2) Subject to subsection (3), if a participant fails to meet the targets for attendance and training during the first 6 months of the placement,
- (a) the participant is required to refund 50% of the wages paid to them as a participant; and
 - (b) the placement is terminated.
- (3) If a participant has failed to meet the targets as described in subsection (2), the participant may apply to the Minister for an exception in accordance with the regulations.
- (4) If a participant fails to complete a placement, the participant is disqualified from being considered for any subsequent placement supported by the Commonwealthland Apprenticeship Fund or the Commonwealthland Internship Initiative.

Reporting to Parliament

- 9 (1) The Minister shall use the annual targets set out in section 3 as the basis for regular reports to Parliament on
- (a) levels of youth unemployment; and
 - (b) recruitment to, retention on, and attendance and completion of apprenticeships and internships.
- (2) In the first year of operation of the programs set out in sections 4 and 5, the Minister shall report to Parliament each quarter, and thereafter reports shall be made annually.

Financial provisions

- 10 There shall be paid out of money provided by Parliament
- (a) any expenditure incurred under or by virtue of this Act by a government department; and
 - (b) any increase attributable to the Act in the sums payable under any other Act out of money so provided.

Regulations

- 11 (1) The Commonwealthland Governor in Council may make regulations as follows:
- (a) establishing the authority for the collection of information that is maintained by the Minister or any employer, participant or other person who receives funding under this Act; and
 - (b) generally for carrying out the purposes and provisions of this Act.
- (2) The Minister may make regulations as follows:
- (a) setting targets for the purposes of this Act;
 - (b) prescribing a minimum hourly wage for the purposes of sections 4 and 5; and
 - (c) providing procedures and conditions for the exceptions from attendance targets under section 8.

Coming into force

- 12 This Act comes into force at the end of a period of 2 months beginning with the day on which it receives royal assent.