1 **Information Technology Registered Apprenticeship Expansion**
2 **Discussion Paper**

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4 **Background**

5 On November 10, 2020, the Commission approved an Information Technology (IT) Registered
6 Apprenticeship Expansion program funded at $3 million using Workforce Innovation and
7 Opportunity Act (WIOA) Statewide funds. On May 4, 2021, the Commission approved a request
8 from staff to revise funding for the program as follows:

9 • $1.5 million WIOA Statewide
10 • $1.5 million DOL Apprenticeship Expansion

11 A request for application (RFA) was published, and six applicants were awarded grants totaling
12 $1,199,605, leaving $1,800,395 available for a second RFA.

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

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

24 • Microsoft Technology Associate
25 ➢ Server Fundamentals
26 ➢ Networking Fundamentals
27 ➢ Security Fundamentals
28 • Computing Technology Industry Association (CompTIA)
29 ➢ CompTIA A+
30 ➢ CompTIA Network+
31 ➢ CompTIA CySA+ (cybersecurity)
32 ➢ CompTIA Server+
33 ➢ CompTIA Security+
34 • Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA)
35 • Linux
36 ➢ Server Administrator
37 ➢ System Administrator
38 ➢ Network Engineer

39 **Issue**

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

10 Issuing the IT Registered Apprenticeship Expansion program will require publication of a second
11 RFA. Eligible applicants for the program will include the following:

12 • Local Workforce Development Boards
13 • Community, technical, and state colleges
14 • Universities
15 • Nonprofit organizations
16 • Consortiums

17 Eligible participants will be Texas residents who:

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

21 The grantee will be required to:

22 • outreach and engage employers who indicate a need for IT-related training;
23 • obtain letters from Texas employers in the IT industry who attest to the demand for IT-
24   related jobs;
25 • develop or expand IT RA programs;
26 • identify the type of IT credential(s) that will be issued upon completion; and
27 • report apprentices who, through their IT RA program, are registered with the US Department
28   of Labor.

29 Staff propose that both WIOA and DOL Apprenticeship Expansion funds be used for continuing
30 this RA expansion program. The funds will be used to support:

31 • the development or enhancement of curriculum for IT RA programs,
32 • the cost of classroom-related instruction (for example, instructor wages; tuition and fees,
33   including certification and other credentialing fees; books; training materials) for
34   participants), and
35 • the costs associated with the on-the job training component of RA programs.

36 **Decision Point**
37 Staff seeks direction on publishing a second RFA for the IT RA Expansion program using the
38 criteria outlined above to award up to $1.8 million, consisting of $900 thousand WIOA

1 Statewide and $900 thousand DOL Apprenticeship Expansion funding. Through this funding, the
2 program will be positioned to train a minimum of 450 eligible participants.

DP – Information Technology Registered Apprenticeship Expansion