

certain performance evaluation requirements; requiring a local workforce investment board that receives a STEP Program grant to develop certain employer-based training programs that meet certain requirements; requiring the Department to distribute STEP Program grants consistent with certain recommendations, to establish certain financial and data collection procedures, and to provide certain technical assistance; requiring the Board to submit a certain annual report by a certain date; expressing the intent of the General Assembly if certain funds are used; expressing the intent of the General Assembly that certain funds be directed primarily to certain individuals; defining certain terms; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to the creation of the Skills-Based Training for Employment Promotion (STEP) Program.

BY adding to

Article 41 – Governor – Executive and Administrative Departments

Section 18-401 through 18-408, inclusive, to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle

4. Skills-Based Training for Employment Promotion (STEP) Pilot Program”

Annotated Code of Maryland

(1997 Replacement Volume and 2000 Supplement)

#### Preamble

WHEREAS, Fifteen percent of Maryland’s children live in poverty and even more live in near poverty; and

WHEREAS, Nationally almost two-thirds of children in poverty have working parents; and

WHEREAS, During the past 20 years, low-income families have seen an erosion in their standard of living, while at the same time the wealthiest families have experienced a dramatic increase in real income and wealth; and

WHEREAS, While welfare reform efforts have helped many former welfare recipients move into the labor force, many of these individuals have found work in entry-level jobs with low wages and without employer provided health care or other benefits; and

WHEREAS, The long-term success of welfare reform and workforce development efforts depends on assisting low-income working parents sustain living wage employment and access career ladders for employment promotion; and

WHEREAS, Helping low-income working parents access career ladders for employment promotion to better jobs with higher wages and employer provided benefits can result in long-term improvements in the economic well-being of low-income families thereby reducing the likelihood of future public assistance needs; and