

January 26, 2017

The Honorable Glenn Thompson
House CTE Caucus Co-Chair
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jim Langevin
House CTE Caucus Co-Chair
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tim Kaine
Senate CTE Caucus Co-Chair
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rob Portman
Senate CTE Caucus Co-Chair
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear House and Senate CTE Caucus Co-Chairs,

We, the undersigned businesses and organizations, write to express our desire to help more Americans enter the workforce with the skills they need to compete for high-skilled, in-demand jobs by supporting career and technical education (CTE) and strengthening the investment in the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins). In the 114th Congress, lawmakers in the U.S. House of Representatives overwhelmingly supported the passage of H.R. 5587, a bipartisan bill to reauthorize the Perkins Act. To realize the goals of this legislation, we must also provide the resources to ensure that all students have access to high-quality CTE programs that are academically rigorous and aligned to the needs of business and industry.

In the decade since the last Perkins reauthorization, our economy has experienced a tremendous transformation, increasingly requiring skills such as critical thinking and technical competencies. CTE is an effective tool for improving student outcomes and helps prepare both secondary and postsecondary students with the necessary academic, technical, and employability skills required to be successful in the workforce. Indeed, CTE prepares students both for college and careers.

High-quality CTE programs, supported by the Perkins Act, are critical to meeting the needs of this new 21st Century economy. As we consider how federal policy proposals can achieve President Trump's promise to "make America great again" we urge Congress to support the Perkins Act and allocate adequate resources to ensure our country's CTE programs can take full advantage of a newly reinvigorated CTE law.

Equally as urgent, employers of all sizes have been reporting a shortage of skilled workers for many in-demand careers. The Perkins Act is an essential and important step to addressing the nation's persistent skills gap and ensuring students of all ages have an opportunity to participate in the American economy with a rewarding career. Perkins can support students, employers and the community by:

- Aligning CTE programs to the needs of the regional, state, and local labor market;
- Supporting effective and meaningful collaboration between secondary and postsecondary institutions and employers;
- Increasing student participation in experiential learning opportunities such as industry internships, apprenticeships and mentorships; and
- Promoting the use of industry-recognized credentials.

Our nation's investment in CTE, provided through Perkins, is crucial to building our economy and maintaining a healthy labor market. Perkins-funded CTE programs, found in every state and Congressional district, are working with business and industry partners to help fill the jobs available today, while preparing a qualified workforce for the careers of tomorrow. From FY 2007 to 2016, total Perkins grant funding to states declined by 13 percent--nearly \$170 million less in funding to support CTE.

As the new Administration and Congress consider investment priorities in the upcoming year, we hope that you will recommit to investing in our nation's CTE programs, so that critical reforms can flourish throughout the country.

Sincerely,

AASA, The School Superintendents Association
 ACCA - Air Conditioning Contractors of America
 ACT, Inc.
 Advance CTE
 Afterschool Alliance
 Alloy Engineering Co. Inc.
 American Architectural Manufacturers Association
 American Association of Community Colleges
 American Association of University Women (AAUW)
 American Farm Bureau Federation
 American Hotel & Lodging Association
 American Society of Employers
 AMT - The Association For Manufacturing Technology
 Arizona Technology Council
 Associated General Contractors
 Association of Career and Technical Education
 Association of Community College Trustees
 Association of Woodworking & Furnishings Suppliers (AWFS)
 Augustus F. Hawkins Foundation
 Automation Federation
 Battelle Memorial Institute
 The Boeing Company
 Business Council of Alabama
 Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL)
 Committee For Children
 Delta Systems Inc

Educators Rising
Family, Career and Community Leaders of America, Inc. (FCCLA)
Future Business Leaders of America-Phi Beta Lambda (FBLA-PBL)
General & Automotive Machine
Georgia Association of Manufacturers
Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education
Global Cold Chain Alliance
Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce
Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, NH
Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce
Hi-Lex Controls
IBM
Industrial Minerals Association - North America
Ingersoll Rand
International Sign Association
Iowa Association of Business and Industry
Jobs for the Future
Learning Disabilities Association of America
Lovejoy Chaplet Corp
Manufacturers Education and Training Alliance
Mississippi Manufacturers Association
Missouri Association of Manufacturers`
Montana Chamber of Commerce
Montana Manufacturing Association
National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity (NAPE)
National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Association of State Directors of Special Education
National Association of Trailer Manufacturers
National Council for Advanced Manufacturing
National Council for Workforce Education
National FFA Organization
National Roofing Contractors Association
National Skills Coalition
Partnership for New York City
Pearl River Community College
PG&E Corporation
Port Townsend Paper Corporation
Quality Float Works, Inc.
Roaring Spring Blank Book Co.
School Social Work Association of America
SEMI
SkillsUSA
Software & Information Industry Association
Technology Association of Louisville Kentucky
Technology Student Association
Tennessee Association of Manufacturers (TAM)
The Boeing Company

The Business Council of Westchester
The New England Council
The silicon valley association
The Society for Maintenance and Reliability Professionals (SMRP)
Thermcraft, Inc
Third Way
Toyota
Union Roofing Contractors Association
United Way Worldwide
Vermont Chamber of Commerce
Vernier Software & Technology
Whayne Supply Company & Walker Machinery Company
WV Council for Community and Technical College Education
Xerox Corporation
Young Invincibles