



American Federation  
of Teachers, AFL-CIO

June 26, 2018

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

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AFT Teachers  
AFT PSRP  
AFT Higher Education  
AFT Public Employees  
AFT Nurses and Health  
Professionals

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Dear Senator:

Randi Weingarten  
PRESIDENT

On behalf of the 1.7 million members of the American Federation of Teachers, I write to urge your support of the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act.

Loretta Johnson  
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Mary Cathryn Ricker  
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

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The AFT believes in and has actively promoted high-quality career and technical education as a viable option for our students. CTE expands opportunities for America's students and equips the next generation of workers with the skills and knowledge they will need for good jobs today and tomorrow. CTE programs both provide students options outside the traditional four-year academic college route and train them to take jobs in technology and the trades. These programs routinely graduate more students than other programs and offer multiple pathways to success in further education, careers and life.

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The AFT has a series of recommendations for strengthening CTE programs, including providing for a commitment to high-quality professional development for educators; supportive partnerships that link school districts and teachers with industry partners; an emphasis on career guidance and career exploration that uses labor market data; and promotion of industry-recognized credentials and certificates for specific occupational areas. The bill you are considering today reflects these recommendations.

High-quality career and technical education programs create opportunities for high schools, community colleges, businesses, and labor to collaborate on creating and sustaining good middle-class jobs for the students and the communities they serve. Such programs also prepare students for the jobs of today and tomorrow by deepening student engagement in learning, and equip teachers with resources to provide students the skills, education and opportunities they need to succeed and excel in today's workplace.

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The American Federation of Teachers is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.



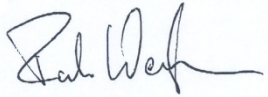
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As the bill moves through committee, to the Senate floor and to conference with the House, we hope that a few changes can be made, including: more funding, better alignment between planning and accountability to ensure that all students have access to high-quality programs, and offering states flexibility in their use of funds.

Education, business and community leaders support reauthorization of the Perkins Career and Technical Education Program. We commend the bipartisan leadership of Sens. Lamar Alexander, Patty Murray, Michael Enzi and Bob Casey in crafting this bill. We urge the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee to pass it with slight revisions so that it can continue moving toward reauthorization.

Thank you for considering our views on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randi Weingarten". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Randi Weingarten  
President

RW:emc opeiu#2 afl-cio