

May 21, 2025

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C 20515

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C 20510

Dear Speaker Johnson, Majority Leader Thune, Leader Jeffries, and Leader Schumer:

On behalf of the undersigned 115 organizations representing employers, education and training providers, workforce boards, community based organizations, workers and student and other organizations invested in ensuring a strong workforce system where workers can access training and employers can hire workers with the skills they need, we urge you to ensure that reconciliation legislation protects key energy investments, preserves access to essential federal support programs without new work requirements, and expands tax opportunities for workers and employers that support access to skills training.

While the economy remains strong, recent data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics shows unemployment slowly rising while job openings decline. In March, the number of individuals unemployed, underemployed, or not in the labor force but who want a job was nearly 18 million—more than double the number of job openings. This imbalance underscores the urgent need for greater workforce investments that allow workers to access good jobs, as well as the maintenance and expansion of investments that will spur job creation.

This concern looms large for workers, and voters overwhelmingly support providing skills training for those displaced by automation and AI. Indeed, more than two-thirds of voters believe that AI is a serious or very serious challenge currently faced by American workers, and 85% of voters support a policy that provides skills retraining at no cost to any worker who loses their job due to automation or artificial intelligence.

Without robust federal investment in workforce training and supportive services, millions of workers may struggle to access family-sustaining jobs, while employers face persistent shortages of workers with the skills they require ultimately hindering economic growth. Public investments in skills enjoy further strong bipartisan support. In fact, 82% of voters support increasing government funding for skills training, including 91% of Democrats, 74% of Republicans, and 83% of Independents.

As Congress considers reconciliation legislation, it is critical that any proposal protects and expands programs that help workers build in-demand skills and access economic opportunity and help businesses grow and thrive. Specifically, Congress should:

- **Protect energy and infrastructure investments** by ensuring the full and efficient deployment of federal funding in clean energy, broadband, and infrastructure projects. These investments are expected to support 3 million jobs annually across construction,

manufacturing, and energy sectors—many of which pay above the national average and are accessible to workers without college degrees. Rolling back funds risks delaying projects, wasting taxpayer dollars, and causing job losses. Already, workforce training programs linked to these investments are being paused due to funding uncertainty, leaving employers without the skilled workers they need and denying communities the dual benefits of job opportunities and economic development.

- **Modernize the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)** by providing businesses with the maximum credit for hiring and supporting eligible workers through work-based learning programs, such as apprenticeships and on-the-job training. This reform would ensure that WOTC not only connects people to jobs, but to career pathways with long-term potential which helps businesses address skills gaps while creating better economic outcomes.
- **Preserve access to essential supports** by maintaining eligibility for programs such as Medicaid, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Evidence consistently shows that mandatory work requirements do not lead to long-term employment stability or higher wages, and they fail to reduce long-term reliance on public assistance.
- **Expand Pell Grant eligibility** to include students enrolled in short-term, high-quality training programs. Doing so will enable more people to access the skills they need while also helping employers find qualified workers more quickly. Expanding access to Pell should not come at the expense of students pursuing other forms of postsecondary education; rather, it should ensure that all learners can access the federal support they need to advance their careers.
- **Strengthen tax credits that support working families**, including expanding the Child Tax Credit (CTC) and the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). These credits can help low-wage workers cover basic expenses while pursuing training and transitioning into better jobs.

Congress has a clear opportunity to build a stronger, more inclusive workforce by maintaining and enhancing investments in programs that create jobs, expand access to training, and provide the supports necessary for success. These investments are effective, fiscally responsible, and essential to our nation's continued economic growth.

We thank you for your leadership and urge you to protect and expand these critical programs through the reconciliation process.

Sincerely

AccuRounds
Ada Developers Academy
All Families Deserve a Chance Coalition
Arkansas United
Barry County Chamber and Economic Development Alliance
Beckerman Consulting Services
Beyond Literacy
Building Performance Institute

Building Skills Partnership (BSP)
buildJUSTLY
Bunker Hill Community College
Business Leaders United for Workforce Partnerships (BLU)
California EDGE Coalition
Capital Area Workforce Development Board
Capital Region (NY) Workforce Development Board
CARDBoard Project
CBIA
Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO)
CHERP, Inc.
Cohen Strategy Group, LLC
Colorado Center on Law and Policy
Community Action Committee of Pike County
Community Education Center SISD
Community Psychology Research
Compass Policy Strategies LLC
Computing For All
Covenant Collaborative Consulting & Training, LLC
Creating Pathways
CT Association of Adult & Continuing Education
Delaware Center for Justice
Digital Equity Learning Network
Dill Air Controls Products
EASTCONN
Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Board, Inc.
El Monte-Rosemead Adult School
Employ Milwaukee
Employment & Employer Services (E&ES)
EntreNous Youth Empowerment Services
Evergreen Goodwill of the Northwest
Future Aviation/Aerospace Workforce News
Green Eco Warriors
GreenLatinos
GRID Alternatives
GST Michigan Works!
Healthcare Anchor Network
HHW Ohio
Hutchinson Antivibration Systems NA
IBSA, Inc.
In-House Information Systems
JEVS Human Services
JobTrain
Jostin Construction, Inc.
JVS Bay Area
JVS Boston
Key Gas Components, Inc
Literacy Council of Reading-Berks
Literacy Source

Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
Longview Chamber of Commerce
Lupson and Associates LLC
Manufacture CT
Marcus Corporation
Marion County Adult Education - South Carolina
Mason County Economic Development Council
Metro Atlanta Chamber
Metropolitan Community College-Nebraska
Michigan Works! Northeast Consortium
Midwest Urban Strategies
Milwaukee Bucks
Mountain Area Workforce Development Board
Narverse Solutions
National Able Network
National Fund for Workforce Solutions
National Skills Coalition
National Working Positive Coalition
NC Budget & Tax Center
New Moms
New York City Employment and Training Coalition
North Carolina Association of Workforce Development Boards (NCAWDB)
Oswego County Workforce New York
Per Scholas
Portland Community College
Proteus Inc.
Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES
Real Performance Machinery LLC
Relmagine Appalachia
Rock Gate Capital LLC dba 160 Driving Academy
Sacopee Valley Adult and Community Education
scaleLIT
Second Chance Center, INC
SkilledUS
Southern 14 Workforce Investment Board, Inc.
Studios Technologies, Inc.
TAK Consultants
Telamon Corporation
The Arc of Harrison County
The Culinary Academy of Las Vegas
Thurston County Chamber of Commerce
Towards Employment
Tradefinderz, LLC
Tread4Success
Turning Point Workforce Development Board
United Way for Southeastern Michigan
United Way of Central Iowa
United Way of New York & 211 New York
Urban League of St. Louis Metro

Waukesha Metal Products
Wilmington Alliance
Women Employed
Workforce Consulting
Workforce Development Council of Seattle King County
Workforce Development Specialists
Workforce Partnership
YWCA Champaign County
YWCA CHICAGO
YWCA Seattle King Snohomish