

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 24, 2023

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education
& Related Committees
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education
& Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Aderholt and Ranking Member DeLauro:

We are writing to respectfully request robust funding for the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins) in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill. We urge you to consider the positive impact that Perkins Act state grant funding has on millions of career and technical education (CTE) students across the United States, as well as its value to the business community, which relies on these programs for a skilled workforce.

We are grateful that Perkins state grants were funded at \$1.43 billion in FY23, an increase of \$50 million over the FY22 level. However, adjusted for inflation, FY23 levels remain over \$320 million below where they were nearly two decades ago, despite the fact that Perkins funding reaches roughly the same number of learners—nearly 12 million secondary and postsecondary CTE students—as it was at that time.

The House Education and Workforce Committee has long recognized the importance of strong dedicated funding for CTE via the Perkins Act. In the 113th Congress, Perkins was intentionally exempted from efforts to consolidate program funding under the bipartisan Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. In 2015, CTE programs were explicitly left out of the Every Student Succeeds Act in recognition of the importance of direct and targeted investment in CTE. More recently, Congress recognized CTE as an effective workforce development and educational strategy when it passed H.R. 2353, the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, reauthorizing the Perkins Act in July 2018 (Public Law No. 115-224).

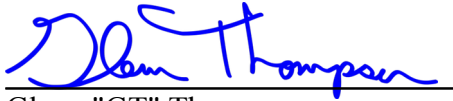
In the past decades, the American economy has undergone a dramatic series of transformations, most recently due to the COVID-19 pandemic, widening skills gaps, demographic challenges, and high inflation. Employers of all sizes are increasingly seeking individuals with specialized skills and career competencies in order to thrive in this rapidly evolving job market. Moreover, the American economy is demanding higher levels of foundational skills from its workers, including creativity and innovation, the ability to think critically and solve complex problems, and collaborative work skills. These requirements cut across every occupation and industry sector and are now a prerequisite for worker success.

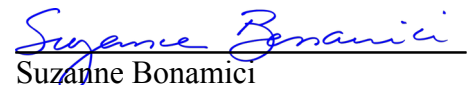
Put simply, jobs in our economy are changing and our education and training systems must keep pace if America wants to recover from these recent economic upheavals and remain competitive on the world stage. A commitment to high-quality CTE is key to meeting this challenge and is central to rebuilding the American economy and empowering every American worker.


We are hopeful your Subcommittee will continue this bipartisan commitment to Perkins in FY24. As CTE programs evolve to meet the needs of employers in high-wage, high-skill, or in-demand career fields, especially as many of these same sectors face severe and persistent shortages of qualified workers, we must provide strong federal support for these programs.

CTE ensures that students have the academic, technical, and employability skills necessary for true college and career readiness, and Perkins funding is key to their continued success. Therefore, we respectfully urge your strong support for the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act in FY24. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

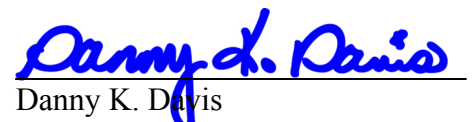

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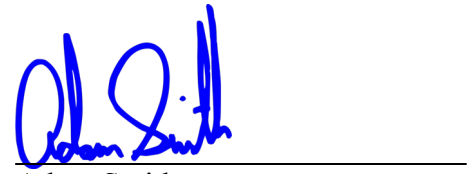

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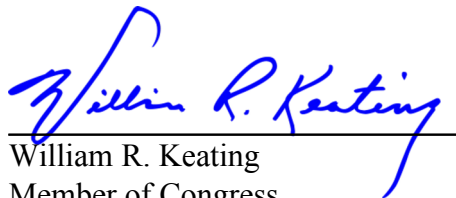
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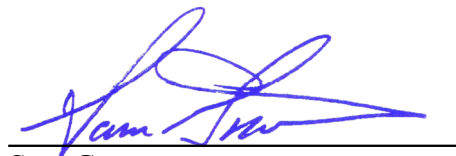
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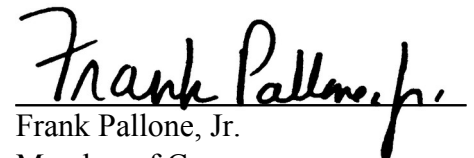
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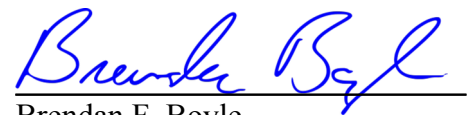
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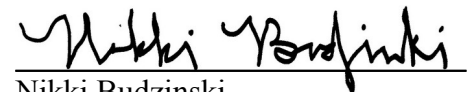
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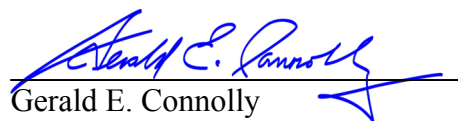
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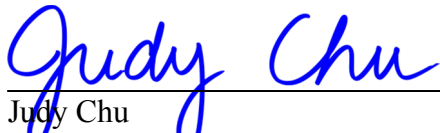
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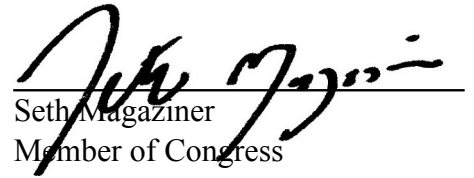
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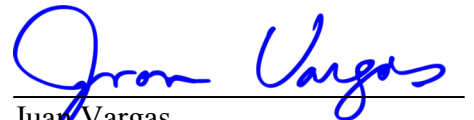
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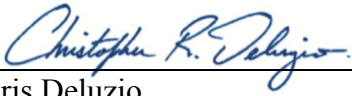
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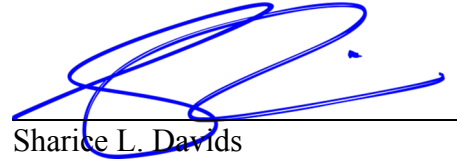
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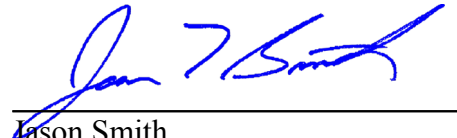
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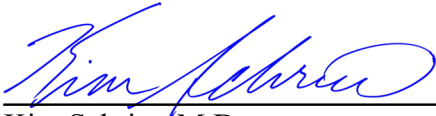
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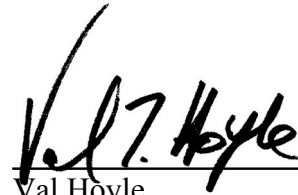
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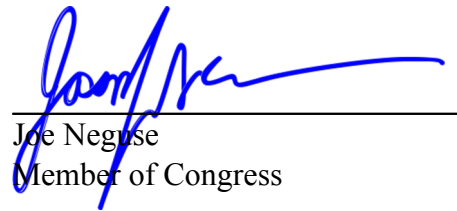
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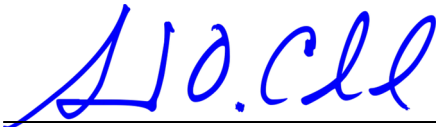
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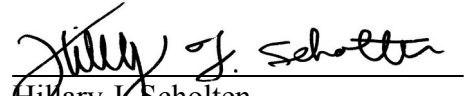
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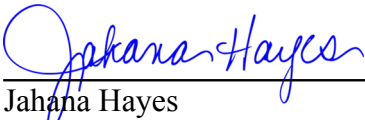
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