



May 17, 2022

To the Members of the U.S. House of Representatives:

H.R. 7309, the “Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2022,” which the House is expected to consider this week, should be improved to better address ongoing unprecedented worker shortages and persistent skill gaps, and we hope Congress will work in a bipartisan manner to address deficiencies in the bill as the legislative process continues.

The current workforce system is not responsive to the changing jobs and evolving skill requirements, workforce training programs are not aligned to industry needs, and the workforce data infrastructure is outdated. These issues are eminently fixable, and the Chamber has put forth a plan for doing so known as [America Works](#).

The United States needs an approach to putting Americans to work that is simple, fast, and employer-focused. It must address immediate employment needs while also laying the foundation for a modernized, adaptive, and resilient workforce development system. Such a system must work for both workers and employers, and it must be a driver of economic growth and competitiveness.

While we are encouraged by work to reauthorize the law, H.R. 7309 has several flaws:

- The expansion of non-employer representation on state and local workforce boards that will do little to help meet the workforce needs of local communities;
- An inadequate system of validating “industry recognized credentials” that appears to be more focused on process than quality;
- Numerous overly bureaucratic changes to on-the-job and incumbent worker training programs that will likely result in less employer participation in a program that relies on their support and involvement;
- No minimum threshold to be spent on training, which suggests a lack of commitment to ensuring federal workforce programs actually train Americans for jobs; and
- Prohibition on for-profit education institutions providing services under the WIOA system.

There are some positive provisions in the bill, such as a nod to competency-based approaches and expansion of eligible training service providers to include online learning platforms. However, even those provisions require further clarification to be workable.

We welcome the opportunity to work with members of Congress to improve upon this much-needed reauthorization.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Neil L. Bradley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Neil L. Bradley
Executive Vice President, Chief Policy Officer,
and Head of Strategic Advocacy
U.S. Chamber of Commerce