



December 12, 2023

The Honorable Virginia Foxx
Chairwoman
Committee on Education
and the Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bobby Scott
Ranking Member
Committee on Education
and the Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Foxx and Ranking Member Scott:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce supports several measures up for consideration during your December 12 markup which would help create a highly efficient and effective workforce system.

Employers across the country continue to face mounting challenges to find workers while millions of Americans lack the skills necessary to fill these openings. Our current workforce system is not responsive to the changing jobs and evolving skill demands of employers. Regulations meant to hold the system accountable are often ignored, and overall, too few resources are directed at training and providing the skills development individuals need.

H.R. 6585, Bipartisan Workforce Pell Act

The Chamber supports H.R. 6585, the “Bipartisan Workforce Pell Act.” Building a skilled workforce is a top issue for the business community and America must provide more opportunities and on-ramps for those seeking to build the skills necessary for today’s labor market. By allowing more students to access programs focused on in-demand jobs and that meet their career goals, this bill would be a win-win for both individuals and employers.

We are pleased that the expansion of Pell recognizes the role for-profit and online institutions can play in delivering high-quality programs to students, while also setting a high bar for ALL institutions and programs to meet outcomes focused on completion and earnings. Ideally, this legislation would also open up the opportunity for students to participate in programs provided by high quality, non-traditional institutions not otherwise eligible for federal student financial aid. We encourage consideration of this addition as this legislation moves forward.

H.R. 6655, A Stronger Workforce for America Act, and WIOA Reauthorization

The Chamber supports the “A Stronger Workforce for America Act,” which would reauthorize the “Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act” (WIOA, P.L. 113-128). This bill

reflects many of the Chamber's priorities with respect to modernizing America's workforce system.

The Chamber is pleased this legislation would take meaningful steps to lay a foundation for a workforce development system that effectively serves both workers and employers and is better able to support economic growth and competitiveness. The following provisions would meaningfully improve the workforce system by:

- Continuing to require State and local workforce boards to be led by representatives of business and for business representatives to constitute a majority of those boards.
- Requiring that a majority of funds must be directed toward workforce development through individual training accounts "ITAs" as well as on-the-job and other employer-based training.
- Promoting innovation, including providing support to employers to implement skills-based hiring; expanding the availability of employer-driven competency-based assessments; incentivizing work-based training; improving the process for identifying high-quality providers of training services and holding them accountable for employer-related outcomes; and opening up the ability for States to pilot new and innovate ways to deliver workforce development programs.
- Compelling state and local boards to fully implement the law's current accountability requirements and strengthen accountability to ensure providers are meeting specific levels of performance in areas related to completion and earnings.

We also support the bill's numerous other improvements to WIOA, such as provisions improving labor market data, supporting employer-driven training, and expanding the current law's pay-for-performance provisions.

Thank you for the work of your Committee to address these issues vital to America's workforce needs. We look forward to assisting you as these bills advance through the legislative process.

Sincerely



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

cc: Members of the Committee on Education and the Workforce