



July 18, 2022

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Leahy, Ranking Member Shelby, Chairwoman Murray & Ranking Member Blunt,

On behalf of Advance CTE, the nation's longest-standing not-for-profit that represents State Directors and leaders responsible for secondary, postsecondary and adult Career Technical Education (CTE) across all 50 states and U.S. territories and the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE), the nation's largest not-for-profit association committed to the advancement of education that prepares youth and adults for career success, we are writing in response to the federal fiscal year 2023 (FY23) Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations (Labor-HHS-ED) bill recently approved by the House Committee on Appropriations.

Your committee's past support for increased investments in the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act's (Perkins V) formula state grant program in recent years acknowledges CTE's central importance in equipping learners of all ages with the skills and knowledge needed to be successful in future careers and in life. As you are aware, Perkins V's formula grants provide foundational support for CTE programs found in every state and congressional district in the nation. These resources are critical to ensuring that secondary, postsecondary and adult learners across the country have equitable access to high-quality CTE opportunities. As the needs of our economy continue to evolve, these programs provide learners with transferable and in-demand skills necessary for success within virtually every sector of our shared economy.

We are therefore appreciative of the House Committee on Appropriations FY23 proposal, which exceeds President Biden's FY23 budget request by proposing an additional \$45 million for this program. The House's current proposal is an important step toward meeting the extensive funding needs of the CTE community via the FY23 appropriations process. However, the CTE investment currently envisioned within this legislation remains insufficient to fully meet the demand for CTE across the nation. This demand has been compounded particularly at a time of high inflation, which uniquely hamstrings CTE programs' ability pay for costs specific to CTE, including the acquisition of industry-standard equipment, expenses related to the attainment of industry-recognized credentials, and authentic professional development experiences that ensure CTE programs are aligned to the needs of the modern workplace.

In the Senate's forthcoming appropriations bill, we strongly believe that bolder funding proposals must be considered. To make high-quality CTE opportunities a viable option for more learners across our nation, ***we believe that Congress should provide at least \$200 million in increased investments for Perkins V's Basic State Grant program.*** This funding request is aligned to the Biden Administration's overall budget request for this account, although we respectfully disagree on how best to deploy these additional resources in the upcoming FY23 fiscal year. While we are supportive of the broader aims of the Administration's proposed "Career Connected High Schools" (CCHS) initiative, this newly created competitive grant program would, by the U.S. Department of Education's (ED) own estimates, serve only 32 grantees across the nation.

We also believe such a proposal would largely be duplicative of the efforts already supported by Perkins V's Basic State Grant program. For instance, aligning K-12 and postsecondary CTE experiences, as envisioned in the House's Labor-HHS-ED appropriations bill, is already an allowable use of state and local funds under Perkins V. Further, secondary learner attainment of postsecondary credits is also one of three program quality indicators contained in Perkins V's accountability system. To avoid creating a duplicative new program, we urge your committee to reconsider the proposal to fund the CCHS and instead encourage you to repurpose these much-needed resources for the law's existing Basic State Grant program where they will be more equitably distributed and impactfully used.

Strengthening the investment for Perkins V's formula state grant program in this way is a national imperative. It is critical both for the learners these programs serve, as well as for the employer community seeking talent. Using the Bureau of Economic Analysis' (BEA) Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE) Price Index to adjust for inflation—the most conservative estimation of inflation over time—current funding for CTE programs via the Perkins Act remains [\\$403 million below](#) FY 2004 enacted levels. The funding we are requesting for this program in FY23 would therefore serve as a crucial down payment toward closing this funding gap. The United States currently spends less than [one-tenth of one percent](#) of its Gross Domestic Product on workforce education and training. Increasing the investment in Perkins V's state grant program will help ensure the United States can remain economically competitive at a critical time in our nation's history, as it implements bipartisan infrastructure investments and seeks to chart a course for the future.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our recommendations above. Should you have any questions or would like to discuss the significant needs of the CTE community further, please do not hesitate to contact ACTE's Manager of Government Relations, Zach Curtis (zcurtis@acteonline.org) or Advance CTE's Policy Advisor, Steve Voytek (svoytek@careertech.org). We look forward to working with you and your colleagues throughout the FY23 budget and appropriations process to make this much-needed increased investment in Perkins V's state grant program a reality.

Sincerely,



LeAnn Wilson
Executive Director
ACTE



Kimberly A. Green
Executive Director
Advance CT

CC: Speaker Nancy Pelosi; Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy; Rep. Bobby Scott, Chair, House Education and Labor Committee; Rep. Virginia Foxx, Ranking Member, House Education and Labor Committee; Rep. Rosa DeLauro, Chair, House Committee on Appropriations; Rep. Kay Granger, Chair, House Committee on Appropriations; Rep. Cole, Ranking Member, House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee Labor, Health and Human Services, Education; Majority Leader Chuck Schumer; Minority Leader Mitch McConnell; Sen. Burr, Ranking Member, Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee.