

**Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions**  
**Subcommittee on Education & the American Family**  
**Hearing on “Building Pathways: Advancing Workforce Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”**

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**Introduction**

Good afternoon, Chairman Tuberville, Ranking Member Blunt Rochester, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Luke Rhine, and I serve as the Vice President for Postsecondary Success at the Rodel Foundation of Delaware. Rodel is a non-profit organization that works to strengthen Delaware’s public education and workforce systems by bringing cross-sector partners together, connecting good ideas to resources, and helping scale evidence-based solutions that deliver results for students and their families.

Prior to joining Rodel, I served as the Acting Assistant Secretary and Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education in the U.S. Department of Education. In Delaware, I served in the Governor Carney administration as the Associate Secretary for Workforce Support in the Delaware Department of Education, overseeing postsecondary education, career & technical education or CTE, and educator preparation and licensure. I also served as the State Director for CTE and STEM education during the Governor Markell administration. Prior to my service in Delaware, I worked in CTE policy at the Maryland State Department of Education and was a CTE teacher at the middle and high school levels.

Over the course of my career, my work has focused on increasing economic mobility for youth and adults by helping to bridge education, workforce, and economic systems. I am grateful for having had the opportunity to do this work at the federal, state, and local levels. I am also grateful for having had the opportunity to learn from federal and state leaders across both parties.

My testimony today represents these multiple vantage points: as a former federal and state official, as an educator who worked in a CTE classroom, and as a parent of a child engaged in a CTE pathway. It is an honor to appear before you and to discuss how CTE and career pathways can support families, strengthen local economies, and create meaningful opportunity for young people.

**The Importance of Career and Technical Education**

Over the past two decades, our country has weathered the dot-com collapse, the Great Recession, and the unprecedented disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic. These were not temporary setbacks; they marked a world fundamentally reshaped by global competition, shifting supply chains, automation, and artificial intelligence. Yet, throughout these cycles of recession and recovery, we continue to confront a troubling paradox: employers across almost every major sector are hiring, yet they cannot find enough qualified workers.

We know that Americans have the talent and drive to succeed, but many lack the specific skills, or increasingly, the combination of skill and actual work experience, required in today’s labor market. This

is a solvable challenge, and it demands a stronger connection between educators, training providers, and employers.

High-quality career and technical education is how we connect these systems and build this bridge. In an era defined by rapid technological change, CTE is not optional; it is essential. It prepares young people and adult learners for high-skill, high-wage careers; it strengthens family economic mobility; and it ensures our workforce is ready, not only for the jobs of today, but for the opportunities of the future.

Our challenge is that there remains a disconnect between policy, practice, and what research tells us works. If we want students to thrive in an AI-enabled economy, CTE and career pathways must be intentionally designed to prepare them for careers with long-term mobility, not for low-wage jobs that leave families struggling.

The research is clear. Rigorous studies, many supported by the Institute of Education Sciences, show that students who complete a high-quality CTE program of study have stronger academic achievement, better attendance, higher graduation rates, and higher rates of postsecondary enrollment than their peers. These gains are most significant when CTE programs align with high-skill, high-wage, in-demand occupations and when students participate in sustained work-based learning experiences, such as internships, cooperative education, and apprenticeship. The combination of technical skill development, strong academic instruction, and real work experience is what helps students build the competencies and hands-on experience employers increasingly expect.

Congress recognized this in its 2006 reauthorization of the Perkins Act, which aligned CTE programs with the academic standards states adopt under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. And Congress reinforced this commitment in its 2018 reauthorization of Perkins V, which strengthened the expectation that every state develop coherent, high-quality CTE programs of study. These programs of study are more than isolated courses, they are structured, sequential pathways that integrate academic and technical instruction; span secondary and postsecondary education; lead to industry recognized credentials; and prepare students for high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand occupations. Perkins V also provided, for the first time, a clear federal definition of work-based learning, underscoring Congress's intent that students participate in sustained, meaningful experiences, such as internships, cooperative education, and apprenticeship, to connect classroom instruction to real workplace settings, and help students build the skills and experience that employers expect.

By strengthening programs of study and codifying work-based learning, Congress affirmed a simple but powerful principle: students learn best when academic instruction, technical training, and authentic work experience are integrated into a coherent pathway that connects education and good jobs.

High-quality CTE makes this possible by combining rigorous academics, technical skills, employability skills, and real work experience. CTE is an unleveraged tool to support academic rigor, address persistent talent shortages, and ensure America remains competitive in the industries that will define our future.

This Subcommittee's jurisdiction over early childhood, K–12 policy, and family well-being reinforces this important truth: preparing young people for high-wage careers is inseparable from preparing them with a strong foundation of literacy, math, and problem-solving skills. CTE brings these elements together in ways that make learning meaningful and valuable for students and families.

## Delaware Pathways as a National Model

Delaware's career and technical education (CTE) system is nationally recognized as a model for how states can build a coherent, high-quality education-to-workforce pipeline. Over the past decade, Delaware has grown its CTE system to serve more than 30,000 high school students annually, or approximately 70% of all students in grades 9–12, and more than 25,000 postsecondary learners. At every level of student engagement, we are seeing results in academic performance, credential attainment, and postsecondary success.

Delaware's middle grades CTE initiative, which stems from Perkins V, is one of the largest and most intentional efforts in the country to bring high-quality career exploration into grades 6 to 8.<sup>1</sup> This work is grounded in state-approved standards that emphasize student identity, agency, and awareness of career options, and includes targeted implementation support to help schools integrate high-quality instructional materials, teacher professional learning, and experiential activities that connect academic instruction and career pathways. This year, the initiative will reach approximately 10,000 middle-grades students, or about 30% of the statewide middle-grades population,<sup>2</sup> helping to ensure that these students are ready for high school and enrollment in a high-quality CTE program.

At the high school level, Delaware has positioned CTE as the core driver of its postsecondary and career readiness efforts. From 2021 to 2023, the state increased CTE student success in postsecondary credit attainment from 15% to 56%, the attainment of industry-recognized credentials from 11% to 19%, and work-based learning participation from 10% to 15%.<sup>3</sup> The Community College Research Center reported that Delaware's recent one-year growth in dual enrollment, between 2022–23 and 2023–24, represents a 44% increase, which is the fastest growth rate in the country.<sup>4</sup> This growth is being driven by a rapid expansion of career-focused dual enrollment courses embedded within CTE programs of study, and strong leadership from Delaware Technical Community College, the state's largest provider of dual enrollment.

Delaware has also built one of the most fully aligned youth apprenticeship systems. The state's youth apprenticeship initiative intentionally connects high school CTE programs of study with Registered Apprenticeship (RA) by aligning CTE coursework to RA-related instruction, and by aligning the state's work-based learning model to mirror RA's on-the-job training. Working with the State Departments of Education and Labor, these programs are approved as both CTE and registered pre-apprenticeship programs, allowing students to earn high school credit and credit towards the completion of RA. In a few short years, these programs have doubled the number of youth, under age 19 entering Registered

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<sup>1</sup> American Student Assistance. (2024). Extending the runway: A national analysis of middle school career exploration. Education Strategy Group. <https://www.edstrategy.org/resource/extending-the-runway/>

<sup>2</sup> Annie E. Casey Foundation. (n.d.). *Public school enrollment by grade level*. KIDS COUNT Data Center. <https://datacenter.aecf.org/data/tables/7591-public-school-enrollment-by-grade-level>

<sup>3</sup> Perkins Collaborative Resource Network. (2025, Aug). *Delaware State Data Profile*. <https://cte.ed.gov/pcrn/explorer/performance/perkins-v>

<sup>4</sup> Fink, J. (2025, September 30). *High school dual enrollment grows to 2.8 million*. CCRC, Columbia University. <https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/easyblog/high-school-dual-enrollment-grows.html>

Apprenticeship and have contributed to more than 53% of Delaware’s apprentices now under age 24, compared to 43% nationally.<sup>5</sup>

Delaware has also paired its pathway work with initiatives that support students and families as they make postsecondary decisions. Delaware Launch Month gives seniors structured time during the school day to complete college applications, explore apprenticeship, connect with employers, and receive support on financial aid and career planning. This work contributes directly to Delaware’s top 10 FAFSA completion rate.<sup>6</sup> Complementing these efforts is one of the nation’s most comprehensive postsecondary promise programs. SEED+ provides tuition support for short-term credentials and for two- and four-year degree programs at Delaware Technical Community College through a 10-semester model, while the INSPIRE scholarship offers up to eight semesters of support at Delaware State University.

Intentional efforts across middle grades, high school, and postsecondary education demonstrate how Delaware integrates CTE and career pathways into a broader statewide strategy for family economic mobility. This work removes financial barriers, expands postsecondary access, and helps students transition smoothly from K-12 education into postsecondary education, workforce training and apprenticeships, and into high-value careers.

### **How Delaware’s System Came Together**

Delaware did not arrive at this point by accident. Following the Great Recession, state leaders recognized that the most significant job growth would be in occupations that require some type of postsecondary credential for entry, and that too many Delawareans lacked clear pathways into these careers.

A cross-sector steering committee was formalized by Governor Jack Markell and developed the Delaware Pathways Strategic Plan, which set five priority workstreams, which are: building a grade 7 to 14 career preparation system, scaling work-based learning, integrating education and workforce data, coordinating funding, and engaging employers and community service providers. These are the exact goals of Delaware’s Perkins V state plan, which was submitted as part of a combined state plan under WIOA.

Delaware then braided philanthropic, federal, and state funding, which includes Perkins, WIOA, ARPA, and other private grants to launch and scale pathways quickly, while maintaining quality. Crucially, every CTE program offered is a state-approved CTE program of study which is required to align with high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand careers, include postsecondary credit and an industry-recognized credential of value where it is appropriate, and incorporate a high-quality work-based learning experience. These expectations were heavily influenced by Perkins V but extend beyond the statute in terms of their expectations for all CTE programs.

This design created pathways that are rigorous, portable, and valuable for students whether they go directly into the workforce, into apprenticeship, or on to two- and four-year degrees. Throughout, Delaware relied on intentional public-private partnership, with Rodel, United Way of Delaware, Delaware Technical Community College, the State Departments of Education and Labor, and the State Workforce

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<sup>5</sup> ApprenticeshipUSA. (2025, Dec). *Interactive Apprenticeship Data*. <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/data-and-statistics/apprentices-by-state-dashboard>

<sup>6</sup> Data Insight Partners. (n.d.). *Current FAFSA completion rates by state*. FAFSA Tracker. [https://national.fafsatracker.com/currentRates?sortBy=current\\_comp\\_rate&](https://national.fafsatracker.com/currentRates?sortBy=current_comp_rate&)

Development Board, to provide leadership, technical assistance, employer engagement, financial and policy infrastructure, and convening power. This partnership created a culture of shared ownership and cascading responsibility that allowed the state to scale quickly while preserving local flexibility and innovation.

### **Lessons for Congress on How It Can Support States**

There are several lessons that emerge which are relevant to Congress as it considers how best to support states, students, families, and employers:

- 1. Start with a shared vision and clear goals.**

A statewide commitment and goal that spans education and workforce programs, coupled with an explicit strategic plan, creates coherence across agencies, funders, and local systems and keeps the focus on outcomes for students and families. A resolution or common vision that spans WIOA, Perkins, and other federal programs would go a long way in helping states to align resources and drive results.

- 2. Make programs of study real pathways, not just courses.**

Require that CTE pathways be sequenced, aligned to labor-market demand, embed postsecondary credit and industry-valued credentials, and culminate in meaningful work-based learning. This ensures that students graduate with real options and transferable value.

- 3. Braid funding across federal, state, and philanthropic sources.**

Delaware's ability to align Perkins, WIOA, ARPA, and private grants made it possible to launch and sustain high-quality pathways without over-relying on any single funding stream. Federal policy or guidance that encourages and simplifies braiding can help states replicate this.

- 4. Integrate CTE with strong academics and early college.**

Delaware's emphasis on dual enrollment, early postsecondary credit, and alignment with K-12 standards shows that CTE can deepen academic rigor rather than dilute it, especially when supported by clear accountability metrics for college and career readiness.

- 5. Invest in work-based learning infrastructure.**

Offices like Delaware Tech's Office of Work-Based Learning, and statewide initiatives such as Launch Month, make it possible to connect thousands of students with employers in a structured, equitable way. Federal investments that support intermediaries and work-based learning coordination would accelerate similar efforts in states.

- 6. Prioritize equity in access, completion, and outcomes.**

Delaware's data show both impressive growth and persistent gaps in pathway completion for certain student groups. Its middle-grades pilots, disability-focused on-ramps, and ongoing equity work offer a roadmap for states and federal partners to pair expansion with attention to equity.

- 7. Strengthen data systems and research to measure long-term impact.**

Delaware's efforts to link K-12, postsecondary, workforce, and social services data illustrate both the complexity and the necessity of robust longitudinal data systems and accompanying research. Federal support for integrated data and research would help states better understand

which pathways deliver sustained benefits for students and families. The ability to connect data across state lines would be revolutionary.

Taken together, Delaware's experience demonstrates that when states align CTE, academic instruction, work-based learning, and postsecondary and workforce transition around a clear vision for family economic mobility, they can deliver results at scale. Federal policy can help more states follow this path.

### **Reflection on Perkins V**

Perkins V represented an important step forward in strengthening the nation's CTE and career pathways system. Its focus on programs of study, alignment with high-skill and high-wage occupations, expansion of work-based learning, and strengthened public engagement processes created new opportunities for states to design coherent, high-quality pathways. In Delaware, and in many states, Perkins V supported the development of rigorous programs of study, helped states design new models of employer engagement, strengthened alignment across secondary, postsecondary, and workforce systems, and supported better data reporting on student outcomes. These are all meaningful advances.

But the law relies on a relatively modest funding model, making it difficult for states to scale high-quality pathways, modernize equipment and facilities, or sustain intermediaries that connect employers and schools. While the statute emphasizes work-based learning, it does not provide the resources needed to build statewide infrastructure to recruit employers, coordinate placements, and ensure equitable access at scale. And while Perkins V encourages cross-agency collaboration, it cannot require states to intentionally bring together their education and workforce systems, leaving students without fundamental information necessary to navigate the labor market and making it difficult to engage employers at scale.

Perkins V lays a solid foundation but leaves these and other key opportunities unaddressed, which is precisely why steady, consistent federal leadership is so important. States can only realize the full vision of Perkins when the federal government provides clear guidance, predictable support, and a coherent implementation structure that aligns with the realities of state education systems. When federal leadership is stable and coordinated, states can design long-term strategies, braid funding streams, build cross-agency partnerships, and invest in programs of study that take years, not months, to mature. Without that consistency, states are left to navigate shifting interpretations, fragmented responsibilities, and unnecessary administrative burden. Clear, sustained federal leadership ensures that Perkins operates as Congress intended, which is to position states to strengthen CTE, expand opportunities across their K-12 and postsecondary systems, and deliver durable results for students, families, and employers.

States like Delaware have shown what's possible when Perkins is paired with state investment, philanthropic and private sector coordination, and strong cross-agency leadership, but those successes shouldn't depend on individual states stitching together workarounds. Reauthorization is our chance to modernize the law and align federal policy so every state can build high-quality pathways. As a country, we should be preparing for reauthorization and focusing on how to create a more coherent federal framework. Instead, states are being forced to navigate federal decisions that distract from, and in some cases work against, their ability to deliver their visions for career readiness.

## **Potential Solutions through Reauthorization**

In reauthorization, I recommend that the Subcommittee signal its strong support for high-quality CTE and consider the following ideas:

- 1. Double the federal investment in Perkins.**

Perkins provides an essential framework for states, but the federal investment has not kept pace with the economic and technological demands facing our schools, colleges, and employers. Reauthorization should significantly increase federal funding so states can modernize programs, expand work-based learning, and upgrade equipment and facilities in ways that match today's labor-market expectations. My recommendation would be to double the amount of federal funding that is made available. In doing so, Congress could accomplish the following goals.

Congress should remove the mandated state split between secondary and postsecondary funds. In my experience, the state split, which asks states to define what percentage of federal funds are allocated to its secondary CTE system versus its postsecondary CTE system, often forces states to make counterproductive choices that undermine the very alignment that Perkins seeks to create. I recommend that Congress create a funding formula that provides direct investments into both secondary CTE and postsecondary CTE and create incentives that support these two systems to work together rather than compete for the same pot of money.

Finally, reauthorization should include targeted, competitive investments to help states, regions, and intermediaries move quickly where demand is greatest. Formula dollars alone cannot support rapid innovation or respond to emerging workforce needs. Formula funds alone also cannot meet the unique needs and challenges that rural communities face. Competitive grants that are issued federally or designed in partnership with states, would allow communities to scale high-quality programs of study, expand work-based learning, and build sector partnerships that deliver immediate and measurable benefits for students and employers. Competitive grants could also help states that have not yet aligned their education and workforce systems to move off the sidelines.

- 2. Reshape the state plan process.**

The current state plan process is fairly compliance-driven and does little to incentivize meaningful cross-agency collaboration or innovation. Only a handful of states have included their Perkins V state plan as part of a combined state plan under WIOA, often citing the ability to co-design ideas and goals across state agencies, but not actually combine these two plans due to the administrative difficulty in doing so.

It also has not kept pace with the changing economic landscape. Under Perkins V, states were asked to develop a transition plan in 2019 and then a four-year state plan in 2020. There is no expectation in Perkins V that states update these plans based on the changing educational and economic needs in their states, as is done in WIOA. The result is, less than half of states, have updated their Perkins V state plans post Covid-19. Meaning, the vast majority of states are operating their state CTE systems based on a plan that they submitted in March of 2020.

Reauthorization should transform the state plan process into a true strategic planning tool, that keeps pace with the changing economy, and requires joint leadership from K-12, postsecondary education, apprenticeship offices, workforce agencies, and employers. The goal should be to strengthen alignment across federal programs and help states create a shared set of outcomes. Importantly, the process should also require states to clearly define the terms and concepts that are essential for implementing Perkins but are not defined in statute. For example, the law repeatedly references “high-skill” and “high-wage” occupations, yet only about half of states define these terms in their current state plans, leaving local leaders without clear guidance. The same is true for phrases like “sustained interactions” in work-based learning or what constitutes “middle grades” CTE. These definitions are foundational for implementation and how local leaders use federal Perkins funds, but the current state plan structure does not create the space, or the expectation, for states to articulate them through its well-designed public engagement process. A redesigned planning process would strengthen coherence, improve implementation, and ensure that federal intent is carried out consistently across states.

**3. Think about middle school and postsecondary education differently.**

Today’s economy requires earlier career exposure, stronger postsecondary transitions, and clearer connections between education and work. Federal policy should encourage states to integrate career exploration in middle grades or earlier, helping students build identity, agency, and awareness of high-skill, high-wage opportunities long before they make decisions about high school coursework.

At the same time, work-based learning must be elevated across the full education continuum. At the secondary level, high-quality work-based learning, through internships, cooperative education, and youth apprenticeship, has become one of the most innovative and effective strategies for connecting students to real-world experiences. At the postsecondary level, work-based learning could be more transformative. Yet Perkins provides almost no guidance or encouragement for community and technical colleges to embed these experiences into their programs. Given the role that applied learning plays in increasing completion, reducing student debt, and improving job placement, federal policy should signal strong support for work-based learning as a core component of both secondary and postsecondary CTE.

Finally, reauthorization should promote stronger and more intentional connections between postsecondary institutions and employers, including how CTE can align with Registered Apprenticeship and how CTE can be a vehicle to support degree apprenticeships, which combine college coursework with paid, safe, and structured on-the-job learning. These models have demonstrated strong returns on investment for students, as they earn wages, gain experience, and complete industry-valued credentials and degrees with little or no debt. This would also create new ways for employers to shape and support talent development in partnership with community and technical colleges.

**4. Help states connect policy, practice, and research.**

States need better support to implement what works. Reauthorization should strengthen the federal role in conducting and disseminating high-quality research, supporting technical



assistance, and incentivizing partnerships with intermediaries that translate research into practice.

Specifically, reauthorization should include consistent annual funding for rigorous research on CTE carried out by the Institute of Education Sciences and a set of national activities that helps states connect this research to their implementation practice. Congress should consider earmarking a small percentage of the annual state grant appropriation for these activities, as it did with research on elementary and secondary education and higher education.

Federal policy should also encourage states to build and use integrated data systems that link K-12, postsecondary, workforce, apprenticeship, and unemployment data, enabling leaders to understand which pathways deliver long-term results for students and families. This will ensure that policy decisions are grounded in evidence and drive continuous improvement.

### **Federal Uncertainty**

Earlier this year, the Administration signed an Interagency Agreement (IAA) transferring the administration of Perkins V from the U.S. Department of Education to the U.S. Department of Labor or DOL. This action positioned DOL as the “centralized hub” for federal workforce programs, effectively relocating a longstanding education program into an agency whose primary charge is job training, not career development. It is my understanding that under this agreement, policy authority technically remains with the Secretary of Education, but day-to-day implementation, oversight, and staff supervision now reside with DOL. In my opinion, this is creating a confusing and potentially inefficient structure that raises legal, operational, and strategic concerns. This administration has now done the same with various education programs, citing the success of OCTAE’s transition to DOL, which is not yet known.

I believe that this shift has the potential to undermine the coherence and progress that states and local communities have built over decades. CTE is fundamentally an education program. Moving Perkins to DOL inserts layers of bureaucracy, removes OCTAE from the education context it needs to operate effectively, and threatens the alignment between CTE and other educational title programs that support “special populations” defined in Perkins V. It also has the potential to separate CTE accountability from the broader state accountability systems, which would create inefficient measurement approaches and the inability to communicate student progress.

As a former state CTE director, I relied on my federal counterparts to provide me with sound legal briefings on how Perkins, and CTE more broadly, can intentionally connect to WIOA, IDEA, ESEA, and other federal programs. States now face some uncertainty about how charter school regulations, academic assessments, civil rights responsibilities, and cross-references to other education statutes will be interpreted by an agency that has limited experience in public education. In my opinion, this threatens program quality, has the potential to disrupt long-standing partnerships, and puts at risk the intention of Perkins V and its ability to help students enter high-wage, high-skill, and in-demand occupations.

CTE has transformed over the past 25 years precisely because it has been anchored in both K-12 and postsecondary education, informed by research, and supported by bipartisan leadership. Outsourcing CTE to a workforce agency risks this progress. Employers rely on secondary and postsecondary CTE to

build talent pipelines, and families rely on CTE to provide pathways to economic mobility, not just the first job available. The federal shift jeopardizes these outcomes.

I believe the intent behind the Interagency Agreement is to dismantle the U. S. Department of Education and is not to improve the alignment between education and workforce systems. The goal of improving alignment is a good one, but this is not the vehicle to accomplish that objective. Every state in the country is working to better connect K-12, postsecondary education, and workforce development, and there is broad bipartisan support for reducing duplication and creating a more coherent experience for students, families, and employers. At the state and local levels, these partnerships are essential. But transitioning federal programs across agencies is complex, and it requires careful due diligence to ensure that the change strengthens the system rather than disrupting it.

Major federal shifts, like those initiated by the Interagency Agreement, require public input, transparency, and at minimum, a basic estimate of the administrative and fiscal burden on states, institutions, and taxpayers. As a former federal official, I was required to conduct a cost estimation for even a simple proposal to collect new data from states. Before any regulatory or administrative action moved forward, we were expected to demonstrate that the benefits of the change outweighed the anticipated burden to state agencies, school districts, colleges, and students. Those procedures exist to ensure that the federal government does not unintentionally create unfunded mandates, misalign existing systems, or add costs that fall on the very communities we are trying to support.

It is my understanding that none of these steps occurred with this transition. There was no public engagement process, no request for comment, and no estimation of the fiscal impact on states or on the federal government itself. And based on the operations and staffing models outlined in the IAA, there is reason to believe that this transition may actually increase federal administrative costs, as the U.S. Department of Labor retrofits systems, hires staff with education expertise, and builds new processes that already exist and function within the U.S. Department of Education. Without a transparent fiscal estimate, Congress and the public cannot determine whether this approach saves money, costs more, or creates duplicative structures across agencies.

The goal of better aligning education and workforce is the right one. But the federal government must pursue that goal with the same level of transparency, public engagement, and cost awareness that it requires of states. Reauthorization offers Congress an opportunity to reaffirm those expectations and ensure that federal actions strengthen, rather than destabilize, the systems students and families rely on.

CTE has always been an area of consistent bipartisan support, and that is why the field has made such extraordinary progress. Congress strengthened CTE in 2006 by aligning it with academic standards, and again in 2018 by codifying programs of study, expanding work-based learning, and improving accountability. These bipartisan actions helped CTE evolve into one of the most effective strategies for preparing students for postsecondary education, careers, and lifelong learning.

Congress should reaffirm that CTE is an integral part of our nation's public education system and ensure that the administration of Perkins remains within the U.S. Department of Education. That commitment will protect the bipartisan gains of the past two decades and ensure that CTE continues to deliver opportunity for students and a competitive workforce for our nation.