

Joe Trauger

Vice President

Human Resources Policy

May 29, 2014

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Senate Committee on Health, Education
Labor and Pensions
428 Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Health, Education
Labor and Pensions
428 Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Kline
Chairman
House Education & Workforce Committee
2181 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable George Miller
Ranking Member
House Education & Workforce Committee
2181 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Harkin, Ranking Member Alexander, Chairman Kline and Ranking Member Miller:

On behalf of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), I am writing to express our support for your leadership in developing valuable skilled workforce legislation, and specifically, your efforts on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Manufacturers are significantly impacted by the lack of high-skilled workers required to meet the needs of advanced manufacturing. We need immediate and long-term solutions to replenish the skilled workforce pipeline and this legislation takes significant steps towards those solutions.

The NAM is the nation's largest industrial trade association, representing small and large manufacturers in every industrial sector and in all 50 states. The NAM's mission is to enhance the competitiveness of the manufacturing economy by advocating policies that are conducive to U.S. economic growth. Over 80 percent of manufacturers report a moderate or serious shortage of qualified applicants for skilled and highly-skilled production positions, reducing net earnings by up to 11 percent every year. Promoting training programs that are in demand and recognized by employers as necessary to success will go a long way towards solving that problem.

Industry-recognized credentials are the primary workforce development priority for the NAM and we are glad to see the legislation embraces that mission, both by working to prioritize funding for industry-recognized credentials, but also that attainment of post-secondary credentials will improve the quality and quantity of workers available in the manufacturing workforce. Manufacturers are also pleased to see this effort leading to significant reforms of the workforce training system. Reducing the bureaucracy and allowing workforce training dollars to focus on training are two key goals the NAM supports.

Manufacturers need access to individuals with the technical skills necessary for modern manufacturing. We have identified the skills and certifications necessary to begin to fill that gap

and believe workforce training programs should prioritize and focus resources on those programs. The bill you have crafted addresses this in a thoughtful way and also gets at other deficiencies in the program. We look forward to working with you as WIOA moves through the process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Trauger", is centered on a light green rectangular background.

Joe Trauger
Vice President
Human Resources Policy

cc: Senator Patty Murray
Senator Johnny Isakson
Representative Virginia Foxx
Representative Ruben Hinojosa