



May 28, 2014

The Honorable John P. Kline Jr.
Chairman
Committee on Education & the Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2302

Dear Chairman Kline:

On behalf of the National Retail Federation (NRF), I would like to express our support and appreciation for the work the Committee is doing to address job training. H.R. 803, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act will provide more flexibility in how workforce training is conducted and would strengthen the role of employers in the system.

NRF is the world's largest retail trade association, representing discount and department stores, home goods and specialty stores, Main Street merchants, grocers, wholesalers, chain restaurants and Internet retailers from the United States and more than 45 countries. Retail is the nation's largest private sector employer, supporting one in four U.S. jobs – 42 million working Americans. Contributing \$2.5 trillion to annual GDP, retail is a daily barometer for the nation's economy. NRF's This is Retail campaign highlights the industry's opportunities for life-long careers, how retailers strengthen communities, and the critical role that retail plays in driving innovation. www.nrf.com.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is a bipartisan effort to reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act in ways that seek to address job training needs in our current economy. By streamlining programs to better serve those seeking help, allowing flexibility to support real-world education, and better coordination with businesses to allow for stronger understanding of actual workforce needs, this bill moves training forward into the modern economy.

This bill will clear away unnecessary roadblocks so that those seeking help can find it, and tailors training assistance to each individual's needs. In addition, H.R. 803 makes changes to the operation of state and local workforce boards to better react to the needs of their communities while working closer with local employers to find ways to best address training programs for their own communities. There is also a goal to increase collaboration with the community colleges so that they provide training for local area job skills.

NRF is supportive of efforts to move this bill forward. Streamlining workforce training programs increases efficiency, creates accountability, and improves actual training. All of these reforms are important as our country strives to boost our economy.

Sincerely,

David French
Senior Vice President
Government Relations