Reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act: Education for the 21st Century Workforce
Bill Number:
Hearing Date: June 24, 2004, 10:00 am
Location: SD-430
Dr. Michael Rush
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Rush Testimony
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Dr. Michael Rush
Idaho Division of Professional-Technical Education, Boise, ID
Administrator
Testimony

Good morning Chairman Enzi, Senator Kennedy and members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on the federal investment in career technical education or as we call it in Idaho: Professional-Technical Education. As State Administrator for Professional-Technical Education, I am responsible for funding Idaho's 760 high school programs and six technical colleges, serving almost every high school student in the state and over 42,000 post secondary students, including adults. Our agency provides technical assistance, curricula, assistance with accountability, and leadership for innovation.

I am also the President of the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium. Established in 1920, the Consortium serves as the professional society of state and territory agency heads responsible for public career technical education at the secondary, postsecondary and adult levels in all fifty states, eight U.S. Territories, and the District of Columbia. I request that the association's recommendations for Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act (Perkins) reauthorization be included in the record.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, the work you do really does make a difference in the lives of students across the country. The decisions you make, and even the speed at which they are made, significantly affect our ability to create opportunities for students. One such student is Chelsie Lea Marler. Chelsie took professional-technical classes in welding, auto technology, mechanics and power technology in her home high school, Meridian High. As a high school senior, she enrolled in an automotive collision repair program at the Dehryl Dennis Technology Center. During this time, Chelsie took advanced placement academic classes and was President of her Skills-USA chapter. She

is now enrolled in the auto body program at the College of Southern Idaho, and intends to continue her education to become an auto collision forensics investigator.

Chelsie's experience reflects the characteristics of modern career technical education: 1) solid technical skills development that provides opportunities for employment and advancement; 2) the integration of high-level academics and technical preparation that prepares students for the future; 3) the articulation of career technical education, from comprehensive high school programs to technical centers to two-year colleges and beyond; and 4) the development of leadership and other workplace skills critical to success in life.

Building on What Works

At every level of Chelsie's educational experience, Perkins dollars were used to provide opportunities that would not have otherwise existed. As you begin deliberations on what the federal investment in career technical education will look like in the future, I offer the following observations and recommendations, which, share at their foundation legislative, programmatic, and fiscal support for states.

Recommendation: Maintain a focus on the improvement and acquisition of technical skills.

Representing only about three percent of the federal education budget, Perkins' funding for career technical education is limited. Nonetheless, this investment is critical to assuring a national focus on technical skills development and improvement. While Perkins has promoted the integration of academic and technical education — which I wholeheartedly support — we cannot afford to dilute its focus. It has been suggested that Perkins dollars should be used to fund general high school reform. Any attempts to finance high school reform with Perkins dollars would only serve to severely limit the operation of the country's technical education programs, they would not — indeed they could not — significantly impact academic performance.
It is also important to remember that although career technical students are increasingly likely to pursue postsecondary education, the vast majority of all American students do not graduate from high school and immediately enroll in college. This majority of students should have access to quality career technical education programs that support their decisions on when to enter the workforce. Students should not and do not have to make a choice: education or work. Quality secondary career technical education programs prepare students for both. Research has found that quality career technical education programs help ensure better alignment to career goals (shortening those years of finding oneself before beginning a career), prevent dropouts, and improve both academic and technical achievement.

Recommendation: Ensure coordination of funding streams.

One of the real success stories in Idaho has been the coordination of the Basic Grant with Tech Prep. Although it has taken some time to build the infrastructure, every school district and technical college in Idaho is in a tech prep consortium. The principles of academic integration and articulation between secondary and postsecondary education have been used to improve all of the technical programs. In addition, basic grant dollars are used to support tech prep activities at the local level. This year, Idaho experienced a 54% growth in professional technical students who signed up for the tech prep sequence; and in 2003, students earned nearly a million dollars worth of academic credit while still in high school through tech prep. Making sure that the programs within Perkins are coordinated and contribute in a non-duplicative way is critical to making the most out of the legislation.

Recommendation: Promote the collection and dissemination of information about the world of work and the preparation necessary to successfully enter it.

The U.S. economy and workforce are rapidly changing. "These [demographic] developments pose potential problems for employers and the economy generally, as the possible loss of many key experienced workers could create shortages … with adverse effects on productivity and economic growth." It essential that we encourage the realization of the full workforce potential of all Americans. Not only do we need to engage and prepare more Americans for participation in the labor market, we need to be sure that they are prepared with the skills and knowledge necessary for careers that exist. Many occupations that once dominated our economy are practically non-existent now. As technology continues to change, the skills necessary for work are constantly altered. For example, a major employer in Idaho went from having no servers and less than 100 personal computers to having 1,300 servers and over 15,000 laptops in only ten years. Students who started in first grade at the beginning of this trend were just getting started in high school at the end of those 10 years. Critical to making the connection between what is happening in the workplace and what needs to be learned in the classroom is ensuring that parents and students have access to quality information about career and education options. In Idaho, our Career Information System produces quality Idaho information that is shared among schools, job service, and virtually all other entities that need to provide career information. A national, generic web program can simply not meet this need.

Recommendation: Support Career Clusters as means to:

• Enhance the integration of academic and technical education,
• Support effective transitions from one level of education to the next without penalizing entry into the workforce at all levels, and
• Promote the development of solid technical skills.

In addition to being prepared for careers that exist today, students must also have the skills and knowledge necessary for the changing workforce of the future. Career technical

education must therefore prepare students with transferable skills that enhance success in a wide variety of educational and work environments. To achieve this goal, programs must: incorporate high quality and up-to-date curricula; involve business and industry; align standards, assessments, and accountability measures; and promote leadership development through student organizations.

Programs that deliver high-level skills while integrating academic concepts have grown significantly in Idaho. The Computer Aided Manufacturing program at the Riverbend Technical Academy in Post Falls is one good example. For each of the past few years, the students in this program have competed in the national autonomous underwater vehicle competition in San Diego. The bad news is that two years ago these high school and community college students — with help from a local engineering firm — lost out to MIT and Cornell. The good news is that they beat the U.S. Naval Academy and the University of Colorado. This year they moved up to 7th place. Other programs such as the Shelley High School Ecology and Environmental Science Program further demonstrate the scope and depth of career technical programs. Live research projects in conjunction with the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Lab and the Idaho Fish and Game strengthen both the technical and academic content. Idaho has also begun to experiment with career academies. For some time, most of our high schools have used career pathways as the organizing construct for their course catalogs. A number of schools have also implemented one or two academies in areas such as Finance, Travel and Tourism, Information Technology, and Health. A new stand-alone medical arts academy and a new high school being organized completely around five academies are the latest efforts to implement this educational reform tool.

Nationally, the level and types of math courses taken by career technical concentrators have shifted over the past 20 years — the number of concentrators taking low level math classes has dropped drastically, while the number taking high level courses has risen dramatically. This past year, our office has worked to align all of the career technical competencies with Idaho's academic achievement standards. This has provided the tool for career technical teachers and academic teachers to work together to improve academic performance.

Although Idaho is making significant progress in improving the quality of its career technical education system, supporting the continued development and implementation of Career Clusters in federal legislation can help us achieve even more. States and locals would be better positioned to meet local labor market needs and achieve the goals of better integration and improved transition if support for Career Clusters was incorporated in the new law.

Career Clusters are an organizing framework for all of the careers in our economy. A Career Cluster: links secondary- and postsecondary-level coursework; integrates academic, technical, and employability skills; and aligns curricula to industry standards, certifications, and assessments. By aligning with the current needs of the economy, the implementation of Career Clusters also helps schools expand their vision for career technical education. Career Clusters extend beyond the traditional program areas

commonly associated with career technical education, representing professions in all industry sectors, such as education, law, public safety, and health. This broadened focus ensures that students have the opportunity to learn, at many different levels, about the countless career opportunities available to them.

Career Clusters can also help link economic development to the educational delivery system. Idaho is just about to begin an initiative to create a set of career clusters with the cooperation of the Department of Commerce and Labor thus connecting education and business.

Recommendation: Support the historical federal role in education — increasing access and equity.

Since students are exposed to numerous professions in broad career areas and not just specific jobs, Career Clusters can also be a valuable tool in breaking down the gender stereotypes associated with certain careers. For example, in traditional career technical education, a student might enroll in a licensed practical nurse program and take courses that would lead to the degree or credentials needed in that state to be a licensed practical nurse. A student who enrolls in the health occupations clusters, however, will be exposed to all of the careers in the broad health field, including nurses, physicians, surgeons, surgical technicians, radiologists, and medical lab technologists. Every student enrolled in a health career cluster program will be exposed to all of the careers in the field, thus supporting enrollment and completion in non-traditional programs of study. Idaho just started its first Medical Arts Academy this past year.

Recommendation: Support the development of technical assessments.

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One key to ensuring quality career technical education programs is the alignment of curriculum, instruction, professional development, standards and assessments. Measuring technical competency is one of the biggest challenges in career technical education, as not all programs or career areas have standards, certifications, or assessments. The variety of careers makes it difficult to synthesize the critical knowledge of all professions into a single test, as we do in academics.

Collectively, State Directors have taken a first step in achieving the alignment of curriculum, instruction, professional development, standards and assessments. We worked with employers and secondary and post secondary educators to identify what people need to know and be able to do to be successful in broad career areas, and then had these competencies nationally validated. Schools and states are now using them to benchmark and update their curricula, enhance career guidance and counseling strategies, more effectively integrate academic, technical and employability skills, and promote better transitions between education and the workforce. This is a good foundation on which to build quality curriculum and instruction, but assessments are the missing component. The development of technical assessments to support the Career Clusters would do much to ensure quality assessment of technical competence. The assessments would also provide better support for the more mobile and global workforce and economy of today. A special national project on assessments could be a great help to states.

Recommendation: Continue to support professional development - including leadership development - and research.

As a nation, we place great value in leadership. We know strong education leaders are critical to effective organizations and the delivery of quality programs. The development of leaders is often overlooked. This is unfortunate, as it is the national, state, and local level leaders who will create and implement the future career-technical education. There is no question that with the graying of the career technical education community, a leadership crisis looms in the future.

"Some suggest we are experiencing a crisis in education leadership of both quality and quantity. At the local level, few districts have made it a priority to identify and groom potential leaders, despite a wave of impending retirements and chronic difficulties in finding candidates."

"Nearly half of current community college presidents indicate they will be retiring in next six years. That figures jumps to nearly 80 percent in the next 10 years. Thirty-three percent of presidents believe that one-fifth of their chief administration will retire in the next five years."

"Today, state education agencies are now almost too lean. Reduced budgets starting in the 1980s stripped them of their capacity to fill many vacancies, much less expand to meet new demands. Too, salary levels have stayed low when compared to those of employees holding comparable positions in federal and many municipal agencies, including school district headquarters. Even when SEA jobs are available, qualified experts and managers customarily find the prospects elsewhere to be more appealing."

In Idaho, our agency has 37% fewer staff than in 1980, yet we have increased our administrative responsibility by five times. We have moved to close the gap by developing a Leadership Institute. We have also worked closely with teacher education programs. Nationally, however, the picture is grim. The case for developing educational leadership capacity is clear. It is in our national interest to invest in the support and development of leaders in career technical education.

Conducting and translating research into policy and professional development that influences practice is a valuable national role. The federal legislation should offer support for professional development that helps practitioners access research-based strategies, learn about effective and exemplary programs and how to replicate them, and enhance their pedagogical and content expertise. This is important to ensure rigorous, relevant, and quality career technical education.

Improving the abilities of technical and academic teachers to integrate content has been one critical area of professional development in Idaho. We have found that without professional development, curricula and other forms of assistance are simply not sufficient. We have developed workshops in a variety of settings, including our statewide summer conference and in individual school districts' professional development days, and conducted a semester-long class to provide more in-depth development opportunities for integration. This is an area that will require continued attention and effort.

Recommendation: Support accountability and provide states with additional authority to encourage performance and/or re-direct or withhold funds from schools when necessary.

Accountability is another state leadership responsibility critical to ensuring quality career technical education. The effective use of accountability data drives improvement and change. Idaho has worked hard to implement the existing measures and improve data quality. A new system is being implemented that will allow us to do much more, but this effort is time consuming and expensive. It is critical that states be given enough flexibility to manage the process. Separating the secondary and post secondary measures is also important in that it fosters the creation of postsecondary measures that better fit the system. In addition, using accountability data in a responsible and meaningful way will result in the identification of the strengths and weaknesses of both specific programs and the career technical education system in general. In Idaho, we work with schools that are struggling to meet performance goals by collaborating in the development of improvement plans that include additional technical assistance and professional development. When a school is challenged by persistent low performance, our state does all it can to keep the resources in place and provide the support necessary for the school to improve. Rarely, there are instances in which local programs simply will not make the effort to improve. In these instances, states need the legislated authority to be able to re-direct or withhold funds from local programs.

Recommendation: Support strong state leadership, with a minimum of 5% or $500,000 for administration and 10% for leadership.

State leadership leads change, facilitates partnerships, ensures economy of scale, leverages multiple resources, and focuses accountability — all of which support quality career technical education. Others agree:

States hold the key to achieving vocational education reform at a pace and scale sufficient to affect national workforce quality (page 6). [S]tate leadership is the best bet to give context, shape, and direction to the diverse local reform activities already under way, and more broadly, convert them to coherent career preparations programs."
— National Assessment of Vocational Education, 1994

"Only state leadership at the state level can bridge the gap between national policymakers/administrators and local practitioners to energize change and drive needed reform."
— Dan Hull, President and CEO, CORD

While I wear multiple hats — innovator, administrator, instructional leader, standards enforcer, data collector — my most important responsibility is ensuring student success. To accomplish this goal, adequate resources for strong state administration and leadership are necessary. My colleagues around the country and I strongly encourage the Congress to support states' rights by continuing the Perkins provisions that allow states to select their sole state agency and determine the appropriate split of funds between secondary and postsecondary education. Further, we recommend the state administrative match, maintenance of effort provisions, and the level of funding reserved at the state level be maintained so innovations, such as those outlined today, can continue.

Recommendation: Allow for flexibility and innovation.

The diversity of our nation is one of its great strengths. Therefore, we cannot expect programs designed to fit Wood River Valley near Sun Valley to also meet the needs of Los Angeles or Boston. We need to maintain our focus on high standards for all states and students, while offering flexibility in how to best achieve quality results. Perkins can be a tremendous help, but only if it does not pile on too many additional requirements beyond those necessary for quality. Innovation is another distinguishing characteristic of the United States. Federal legislation should allow for a portion of funds to be used to innovate, without risk of penalty.

Conclusion

Career technical education is working. It:

• motivates and engages students in their learning;
• provides technical, employability and leadership skills that enable entry into and success in the workplace;
• reinforces and enhances academics;
• helps students find and fulfill their potential; and
• creates career and educational options.

As I began my remarks, I shared Chelsie Lea Marler's success. Career technical education really did make a difference in her life, as it has done and continues to do for many Americans. For the past 87 years, federal dollars have been an integral part of this success by ensuring that millions of youth and adults have been able to enter and succeed in the workforce. I believe that the recommendations I shared today will help ensure that future generations will have the same opportunities that Chelsie had. I would also encourage you to act rapidly. The current educational climate has created tremendous pressures and uncertainty for administrators, teachers, and students. Perkins can make a difference, but a solid direction is needed right away. I look forward to working with you to develop new legislation that builds on and expands our current successes and promotes innovation in our nation's career technical education system.

Thank you.

Blankenship Testimony
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Dr. Frank Blankenship
Columbiana County Career and Technical Center, Lisbon, OH
Assistant Superintendent and Vocational Director

Testimony

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am pleased to be here today to discuss with you the importance of the reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act. As assistant superintendent and vocational director, I am responsible for overseeing career and technical education in Columbiana County, Ohio's most northern county in its Appalachian region. Located in the small town of Lisbon, the Columbiana County Career and Technical Center enrolls 400 students in grades 11 and 12 from all County school districts who are intent on completing a career and technical course of study.

Our students have shown significant achievement gains in both academic and career and technical studies over the past several years, gains which are measurable and data-supported. However, it wasn't always this way. Faced with declining enrollment, our school improvement leadership team reviewed the results of the FY2000 Secondary Workforce Development Report issued by the Ohio Department of Education and discovered that only 65% of students who completed our program achieved the graduation academic achievement standard. In addition, only 42% of the program completers achieved the benchmark on the Ohio Integrated Technical and Academic Competency assessments. Thus, we knew we needed a school improvement process that would provide some structure to assist us in increasing student achievement. The leadership team selected the Southern Regional Education Board's "High Schools That Work" program to guide our school improvement efforts. HSTW, which focuses on combining challenging academic courses and rigorous career and technical studies to raise the achievement of secondary students, has provided a results-oriented focus for reform while also providing a system of staff accountability. An on-site, HSTW Technical Assistance Visit, held every two years, gathers information related to the current operations of our school and sets forth challenges for our leadership team to undertake over the next two years. The data gathered during these visits has helped our staff determine the success of our reform efforts by measuring students' achievement gains.

HSTW has also helped us target our reform efforts where they are most needed. Rewriting all courses of study to reflect academic and career and technical standards, and creating syllabi for all courses to provide structured information to students and parents are just two suggestions offered for us to consider. However, realigning all academic courses to meet the content standards approved by the Ohio Department of Education presents the biggest ongoing challenge for our teachers. This has required systemic changes in the delivery of instruction. Our academic teachers now deliver instruction with contextual strategies rather than with contextual content. We no longer teach "machine trades math." We now teach trigonometry with a "machine trades context." We believe this type of instruction better serves our students and makes us more accountable to parents, higher education and the business world.

At the Columbiana County Career and Technical Center Career, career and technical pathways of study are offered in the clusters of Trade and Industry, Health Services,

Information Technology, Agriculture, and Family and Consumer Services. These career pathways of study focus on industry-based competencies which are measured by administering certification exams. Examples of certification exams taken by our students include American Welding Society certification for the welding and metal fabrication career path, state licensure exams for the cosmetology and health services career paths, and A+ and Cisco Networking certifications for the information technologies career paths.

Currently, we have sixteen articulation agreements with seven academic and technical institutions. These agreements afford students opportunities to earn post-secondary credits upon completion of computer networking technologies, interactive media, health services, automotive services, early childhood education, culinary careers, and careers for teachers programs of study. Four of these programs are sanctioned tech prep programs. These universities, community colleges and technical schools have reviewed our secondary courses of study and determined the correlated coursework that students will be credited upon entrance to the respective post-secondary institution. These industry certification and post-secondary articulation opportunities allow students from the Columbiana County Career and Technical Center to enter the workforce and/or continue a program of study with credible skills and qualifications that should ensure them success and immediate productivity. While these opportunities are many, the goal of the Career and Technical Center is to continue to expand articulation and certification opportunities to allow our students unlimited post-secondary options. The benchmark that we have targeted for post-program placement is 95%. This means that 95% of career and technical program completers are enrolled in higher education, technical education and/or employment related to their secondary field of study. The 2003 program completers had a post-program placement rate of 91%. As a result, the staff is currently making plans to restructure a Job/College Fair which is held at our Center to allow greater participation of schools and businesses as well as students.

Each student who completes a career path program of study receives a career passport that includes a résumé, technical certifications, licenses, endorsements and an “I can” list of major technical and employability competencies in their career field. These passports are used by the students as portfolios to gain entry into their next phase of life.

“I can” lists are recorded accomplishments of students that are monitored by the career and technical teacher over the two years students are enrolled in the program of study. For example, in the health services career path of study, student competencies are measured in areas such as medical terminology, medical law and ethics, clinical chemistry, microbiology, computer literacy, teamwork and professionalism. Under the “first aid and medical emergencies” category, students must be able to identify emergency procedures, perform first aid, maintain cardiopulmonary resuscitation proficiency and respond to medical emergencies. Thus, potential employers will have a greater understanding of students’ capabilities after reviewing the “I can” lists as presented in the career passport.

All students who complete a career path course of study must participate in Ohio’s

Integrated Technical and Academic Competency assessment program. The competencies assessed by the ITACs are reflective of the "I can" lists included in the career passports. Students who master the "I can" lists have been able to meet or exceed the benchmarks on the ITACs. Students in all but one career path program of study met their respective career path ITAC benchmark during the 2004 assessment. This is an improvement from the 2003 assessment, when two career path programs of study failed to meet the established benchmarks. The pass rate on the ITACs has risen from 58% in 2002 to 76% in 2003 to 80% in 2004. We believe that our effort to reflect industry standards in career path courses of study—which have been overhauled over the past two years—is the main cause of this dramatic improvement in student achievement. The alignment of what is being taught and what is being assessed allows the measurement process to be authentic.

Completion of a career path program of study earns a student a Certificate of Completion in his or her career and technical field. However, a student may earn an Honors Certificate of Completion if he or she has maintained a 91% average in the career path program of study, a 95% attendance rate, and met all of the benchmarks on the ITAC assessment. Ten percent of the program completers earned honors certification in 2003 and sixteen percent earned honors certification in 2004.

The majority of students who attend the Career and Technical Center also receive instruction in academic studies at the Center. All students take English, mathematics, science and social studies in both the Junior and Senior years on a 4x4 semester block schedule. These students are "cluster scheduled" into their academic classes to facilitate the use of contextual learning instructional strategies. Cluster scheduling results in students from the same career area of study being placed into the same math and science classes. For example, students from any of the trade and industry career area could be scheduled together, allowing instructors to relate the math and science concepts to the application in the career area during the instructional process. Learning math and science in this context also enhances students' understanding of these subjects. A randomized selection of program completers that participated in the High Schools That Work assessment in 2002 showed an increase in mean reading score from 255 to 287, an increase in mean mathematics score from 290 to 299, and an increase in mean science score from 273 to 302. These scores compared students from 2002 who were not cluster scheduled to students from 2002 who were cluster scheduled.

Getting students to read has been a major focus of our staff. Classrooms have a library of journals and other materials to encourage students to read throughout the day, not just when they go to the media center. Teachers honor students' choices of what to read, whether it is an auto service manual, a dirt bike magazine or a classic novel. When the teachers found that many of the reluctant readers preferred nonfiction books and articles, they asked for more nonfiction and informational reading materials. Multiple copies of the local newspapers are also available for the students. By giving students a choice of reading materials and reminding them of the necessity of being able to read to be successful in the real world, students are beginning to develop an interest and gain a sense of appreciation and satisfaction for the process of reading rather than perceiving reading to be just another school required activity.

Of course, it is important to allocate resources to facilitate the types of systemic changes our career and technical center has been implementing. While the staff has certainly been willing to implement new strategies for delivering instruction, training is a critical component for successful staff transition to creating contextual learning classroom environments. Purchasing additional learning materials, textbooks, computers, software and equipment is also important as our staff upgrades programs to reflect both academic and industry standards. The Columbiana County Career and Technical Center receives $225,000 annually from the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Act to help support the changes in secondary education being implemented. While we would certainly still attempt to accomplish the same educational goals without Perkins funding, I do not believe that we would be able to be as results-oriented without these resources.

I thank you for the opportunity to share some of the exciting educational practices being implemented in a small rural, Appalachian county career and technical school and I urge to you support the reauthorization of the Perkins Act to allow our school, as well as others, to continue the journey of changing the methods of delivering career and technical education to better prepare our students for the Information Economy.

McFarland
Reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act:
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Witness:
Dr. Jo Anne McFarland
Central Wyoming College, Riverton, WY
President
Testimony

Introduction. I would like to thank the Honorable Chair, ranking member Kennedy, and distinguished members of the committee. My name is Jo Anne McFarland, President of Central Wyoming College, which is a public two-year comprehensive college located in Riverton, Wyoming, within the exterior boundaries of the Wind River Indian Reservation. Most of our students are first-generation, "at risk," or economically disadvantaged students. Twenty percent of our students are Native American, with roughly that same percentage of our two-year graduates. Nestled in the Wind River mountain range, Central Wyoming College serves the counties of Fremont, Teton, and Hot Springs. CWC's headcount serves over 2000 credit students for a full-time equivalent credit population of 1350.

My special thanks to Wyoming's Senator, the Honorable Mike Enzi, who is chairing this morning's hearing, for extending me an invitation to address your committee and to Senator Enzi's policy analyst Scott Fleming for his assistance. I also wish to acknowledge the support and leadership of the American Association of Community Colleges and the Association of Community College Trustees, and state my support for

their positions on the reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act.

Most new jobs require some form of postsecondary education. The Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act defines "vocational and technical education" as offering a "sequence of courses that provides individuals with the academic and technical knowledge and skills the individuals need to prepare for further education and for careers other than careers requiring a baccalaureate." A U.S. Department of Labor study has noted that 80% of the new jobs created between 2000 and 2010 will require some postsecondary education, but less than a bachelor's degree. According to a 2003 study entitled Standards for What? by Carnevale and Desrochers, even though, on average, workers with associate's degrees earn less than those with bachelor's degrees, eighty-three percent (83%) of workers with associate degrees earn the same as workers with bachelor's degrees. The "American Diploma Project" also notes that students planning to go to work after high school need as rigorous a curriculum as those planning to go to college. All of this points to the importance of postsecondary programs to the career and technical education (CTE) system. A reauthorized Perkins Act should better reflect and support the role of postsecondary programs in the CTE system. By strengthening support for postsecondary programs, the Perkins Act would better serve the CTE system as a whole.

The truth of the matter is that many students who try to raise a family with only a high school diploma end up at the community colleges at some point in their lives. High school CTE programs should contain the rigorous academics necessary to equip their students with the tools necessary to pursue any of their options after graduation, whether they decide to enter the workforce or immediately pursue postsecondary education. The best bet is for high schools to focus on rigorous preparation in math, reading, and English, as well as some career exploration that focuses students' attention on necessary, sequential, and relevant postsecondary training. We also know that community colleges are best fitted to provide job skills training, whether for recent high school graduates or for those who for whatever reason have dropped out of high school, been laid off, or need to upgrade or re-tool for a different or emerging job. Community colleges and high schools must work together to provide career pathways that lead to productive lives.

Community colleges serve the broadest clientele. Community colleges, by their very nature, are designed to respond to the local needs by creating appropriate training programs on a short notice, whether they arise due to changes in technology, worker shortages, or industry layoffs. Compared to other sectors of education, student enrollment in the nation's community colleges is growing faster and represents a broad clientele. The Center for Policy Analysis at the American Council on Education (ACE) released a brief just last week, on June 15, 2004, entitled: Choice of Institution: Changing Student Attendance Patterns in the 1990. Using data from the Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics, it showed that in the 1990s, the share of undergraduates enrolling in community colleges increased from 39 percent in 1989 to 41 percent in 1999, resulting in an enrollment gain of approximately 248,000 students. Enrollment in community colleges grew by 14 percent during the 1990s, or

approximately 5 percentage points more than all of higher education, which grew by 9 percent during the same time. The same study also showed that over 70 percent of students attending community colleges are "independent", adult, older, and may be married and/or have children. Early indications are that this enrollment trend at community colleges will continue and even grow stronger in this decade.
With the average student age of approximately 29 years, community colleges serve a number of older-than-average, non-traditional students, including single parents and displaced homemakers. A high percentage of these students come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds; they greatly benefit from programs currently supported by the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act, and other workforce initiatives. Through these sources, community colleges receive critical funds to provide training opportunities to students in technical fields where skilled workers are badly needed.

About community colleges. I am proud to be affiliated with community colleges which have always been known as the "People's colleges," primarily because of their access and affordability—and the fact that community colleges take students of all abilities and backgrounds.

It is fitting that the community colleges should be engaged in career-technical training because the community colleges have been engaged in workforce development for--in the case of Northwest College and Casper College as long as the past 60 years, and in the case of Central Wyoming College for almost 40 years. Much of that work we have done quietly and without fanfare. But we have always been about educating Wyoming's citizens of all ages, and most of our graduates stay in Wyoming.

A little about our state's seven community colleges. We are comprehensive community colleges. As comprehensive community colleges, we have three primary roles:

1. To provide the first two years of a four-year degree for transfer to a four-year college or university. Many community college so-called transfer degrees are in such areas as nursing, accounting, or economics—areas that specifically relate to the workforce.

2. Secondly, comprehensive community colleges provide applied degree programs to prepare our students for immediate entry into the workforce. In addition to offering two-year applied associate degree programs, the colleges offer a number of one-year applied diplomas, as well as intensive credential programs, from 4 to 8 weeks in length.

3. Finally, the colleges also offer non-credit continuing education for job skills upgrades, as well as non-credit offerings to pursue recreational, leisure, and personal development interests.

But Wyoming community colleges, which together have a presence in all 23 counties in the state, are different from most of the other over 1600 community colleges in the country in a couple of significant ways. First, Wyoming's community colleges far surpass the national community college market penetration rate. Nationally, the community

college penetration rate is 4.6%, compared to a whopping 6.92% penetration rate for Wyoming's community colleges. Secondly, because our population is so small and because our towns are so far away from each other, Wyoming's community colleges serve not only as educational centers for their service areas, but they also serve as the cultural and recreational centers for the communities in their service areas. Our colleges are governed by locally elected boards, and their facilities are widely used by the communities. We are close to the people we serve. We host high plays in our theatres and provide a stage for the Kiwanis Stars of Tomorrow. The colleges provide camps, concerts, and art shows—and serve as community meetings places. For example, little old Central Wyoming College had over 100,000 people over the past year attend events in our Arts Center Theatre. These are events not associated with regular college offerings. The colleges improve the cultural and educational lives of their communities.

The colleges are a great attraction to potential incoming businesses and should be recognized as such. Wyoming's community colleges ARE part of the communities they serve—and are highly responsive to their needs. We're small, and we're flexible.

The challenges of serving a rural population. The population of Wyoming is less than one-half million people spread over 38,000 square miles. Only three of Wyoming's cities and towns have populations of at least 50,000. CWC's service area alone encompasses almost 60,000 people spread over 15,000 square miles. Our service area includes Jackson Hole, which is 150 miles over a high mountain pass; Thermopolis to the north of us is 75 miles away through the Wind River Canyon. Fort Washakie on the Wind River Indian Reservation is a 45-minute trip away from the main campus in Riverton. Because of the small population spread over vast distances, we are highly dependent upon distance education as a means to deliver our courses. In Fremont County alone, we have 8 public school districts and one Bureau of Indian Affairs school. Students from Jeffrey City have to travel 160 miles roundtrip each day by bus to Lander. Because of the small number of students in each school (classified as "frontier" schools by the federal government), Wyoming's small schools individually lack the resources to keep up with today's career and technical education needs. Gone are the days when wood shop and auto mechanics can meet the needs of a highly technical global economy. Without sharing of resources through partnership with the college, students from high schools, as well as from the college, would have very limited choices in career and technical training. To give you an idea of the sizes of some of our high schools, the following chart indicates the numbers of high school juniors and seniors in Fremont County public schools:

Junior and Senior High School Enrollment in Fremont County

FCSD #1 361
FCSD #2 47
FCSD #6 73
FCSD #14 86
FCSD #24 52
FCSD #25 387

Examples of career-technical programs eliminated in Fremont County high schools, due to lack of funding:

- Microsoft Authorized Academic Training Academies
- Cisco Internetworking Academies
- Health Occupations Program
- Welding (reduced to ½ time)
- Agriculture (reduced to ½ time)
- Food Service Industry Program
- Business and Office Program
- Marketing Education
- Accounting
- Drafting (reduced to 1/2 time)
- Family and Consumer Science
- Computer Science (Programming)
- Graphic Arts and Journalism (Broadcast and media)
- Auto Maintenance
- Building Trades and Construction
- Parenting and Child Development Program
- Vocational Clubs are being eliminated as well: FBLA, DECA, and FHA

Without strong partnerships with community colleges and the sharing of resources through tech-prep arrangements and dual enrollment, high school students in Wyoming would have extremely limited career-technical training options. Sharing of resources between the high schools and college in partnership can provide career-technical training to an even broader range of students.

Dependence upon Carl Perkins Funding. We are also highly dependent upon Carl Perkins funding to provide needed funding for career and technical equipment and services. This upcoming year, Central Wyoming College is slated to receive $174,581 in Perkins funding. This might seem like a small amount. However, without this assistance, CWC and its secondary partners would be deprived of needed up-to-date career and technical training and services. Currently, only a total of $4.2 million comes to Wyoming in Perkins funding, and only $1.2 million of that comes to Wyoming's seven community colleges. If that amount were reduced by 25%, as proposed by the Administration in its FY 2005 budget, Wyoming's seven community colleges would have share $900,000. That leaves even less to do the more that is needed to train today's students for tomorrow's jobs.

We have heard quite a bit about workforce development requiring the three Es: education, economic development, and employment. I will use the five P's to briefly capture what Wyoming's community colleges are doing in the area of workforce development. It's what I call P to the 5th power.

I refer to the five Ps—or P to 5th power as follows:

1. Partnerships
2. Pathways
3. Planning
4. Patronage
5. Passion

First—partnership. As colleges based in and serving local communities, the colleges are adept at partnerships—a critical element in successful workforce development. Since their establishment between 40 to 60 years ago, the community colleges have depended upon community advisory boards to ensure that our applied degrees are serving employer needs. Let me give you some examples of community college partners:

• Wyoming Department of Workforce Services and Vocational Rehabilitation
• Wyoming Workforce Development Council
• Wyoming Workforce Alliance
• One-Stop Workforce Committees and Entities
• Wyoming Youth Council and county one-stops
• Wyoming Business Council
• City, county, and state (WEDA) economic development organizations
• Local and area businesses
• Wyoming Department of Family Services
• Chambers of Commerce
• City councils
• Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES)
• Local school districts including tech prep and concurrent enrollment efforts
• University of Wyoming
• Tribal TANF offices (Shoshone and Arapaho)Tribal TANF office
• Native American Vocational Tribal Employment Programs (NAVTEP)
• Correctional facilities
• Hospitals
• Area churches
• Professional Standards Teaching Board
• Wyoming State Nursing Board
• Service Organizations such as Rotary, Lions, and Kiwanis
• State Interagency Training Consortium
• College Business Programs Advisory Committees
• Various medical agencies and organizations to provide clinical facilities for training in health occupations programs

Second—Pathways. Successful workforce development MUST have upwardly mobile pathways that take students from where they are to where they need to be to lead self-sufficient and productive lives. Getting a job, if a very low-paying one, may be less helpful in the long run than helping our students continue their education to prepare them for higher paying jobs. Wyoming's community colleges pride themselves in providing

pathways to success for many first-generation and many "at risk" students, many of whom have, for a variety of reasons, dropped out of school and failed to finish their high school education. As such, the community colleges provide a continuum of three phases of education—to work with students from where they ARE to where they NEED TO BE. These three phases are as follows:

1. PRE-COLLEGE (First Pathway)

The colleges offer adult basic education and English as a Second Language. We also offer education for the General Education High School Equivalency Diploma, called the GED, in cooperation with the Dept. of Workforce Services. For example, two years ago, CWC graduated 200 GED graduates, making it the largest high school graduating class in Fremont County. We also work with unskilled and unemployed (or underemployed) adults through such programs as TANF, in partnership with Workforce Services. We teach such skills as the work ethic, basic computer skills, customer services (for example through the Quick Start program, in cooperation with the Wyoming Business Council).

Together, the colleges annually educate over 5200 students in ABE/GED/ESL offerings.

2. COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY (Second Pathway)

The next phase of the continuum relates to both transfer and applied degrees and certificates in a variety of vocational/technical and other areas.

In vocational/technical areas alone, Wyoming's seven community colleges graduate over 1,200 vocational/technical students annually.

This number does not include many transfer degrees, such as nursing or business administration, geared to prepare students for immediate entry into the workplace.

3. LIFELONG EDUCATION: WORKFORCE TRAINING (Third Pathway)

This third phase of the continuum emphasizes the necessity for keeping our workforce skills up-to-date and honed for emerging jobs, markets, and businesses.

In workforce lifelong education and workforce training, the 7 colleges offer over 1,000 classes per year, with over 6,600 students and over 6,500 graduates.

Tech-prep is a key example of career pathways that work. Perkins funding has supported tech prep pathways and assisted in developing working relationships, articulation agreements, and seamless educational pathways between secondary and post-secondary educational institutions. At Sheridan College, dual credit programs are offered for high school students that include vocational exploratory classes and opportunities for career exploration and job shadowing.
The Perkins Act currently contains two key programs that improve connections between community colleges and their local school systems: Tech Prep and the Tech Prep

demonstration program. While there is room for improvement, the Tech Prep program has proven valuable in establishing pathways for CTE students to make a smooth transition from high school to college. AACC recommends, and I support maintaining the Tech Prep program, with a modification to require that contracts between consortia partners be renewed every 2 or 3 years, so that details governing the program and expenditure of funds can be reviewed on a regular basis.

The Tech Prep Demonstration program has emerged as a small but important source of support for community colleges seeking to establish or improve middle colleges on their campuses. Middle colleges are generating a tremendous amount of interest as a means of smoothing and encouraging the transition from high school to college, often targeted to students who would otherwise be less likely to make that leap. In each year of funding for the Tech Prep demonstration program, proposals have far outnumbered available grants, demonstrating the level of interest in establishing "middle colleges" at community colleges. This program should also be maintained in the reauthorized Perkins Act.

Third "P" is PLANNING. Each year the colleges plan and host many workforce investment activities. Let me give you a few examples from this past year:

• Northwest College offered professional development for 65 educators, as well as school-to-careers events and competitions for 190 middle and high school youth
• Northwest College also provides 35 student interns in businesses and agencies
• LCCC participated in the Workforce Development Expo in Washington, and has offered 3 career fairs, in partnership with the Dept. of Workforce Services.
• CWC, too, offered a career fair on our campus this past year that attracted over 300 participants, with 26 companies interviewing. CWC also hosted a Career Fair with over 500 participants and 46 businesses on display.
• EWC hosts an Annual Technology Day with about 120 participants, and EWC's Ag Department developed and hosted the Beef Symposium with about 40 participants.

This just gives you an idea of the necessity of the planning that improves workforce development on the part of the colleges.

Strengths of community colleges in workforce development. The colleges provide many examples of working partnerships to enhance workforce development. Strengths of community colleges in workforce development are as follows:

• Access to talented trainers and instructors
• Training provided for businesses and agencies of all sizes
• Training that responds to regional and local needs; builds regional economic development capacity
• Coordinated flexible, responsive, customer-focused, valuable partnerships
• Support of the Department of Workforce Services and other local business partners
• Providing financial assistance to the students and programs (supplies and support)
• Community colleges are uniquely positioned to be the "first choice" provider for meeting workforce development needs due to the community colleges' "bank" of

expertise and knowledge (professionals and faculty) and training facilities and technology (where else can you train 25 people at a time on computers?)
• Community colleges are very cost competitive.
• And Wyoming's community colleges are the best of the best. This year, for example, the National Center for Digital Education named LCCC among the "Top Ten Digital Savvy Community Colleges in the country for the large/urban category. CWC was named in the Top Ten Digital Savvy Community Colleges in the small/rural category. CWC was also named in the Top 50 Fastest Growing Community Colleges in the U.S.

Examples of working with small businesses. A prime example of one of CWC's partnerships with business through use of Perkins funding is our "internship" program. We place college student interns with Brunton; Wyoming.com; local school districts; McKee, Marburger, & Fagnant (accounting firm); and the National Weather Service to provide practical work experience opportunities to students, particularly in areas in which the technical coursework alone is insufficient to prepare the student for direct entry into the workforce. The local just love our interns and usually hire these students on a permanent basis, sometimes even before their internship period is completed. The tyupe of work ranges from technical support to engineering functions. Students in CWC's internship program earn college credits while they gain practical experience on the job.

CWC has also conducted a number of workshops for local businesses and organizations, including the following over the past month:

• Conflict Resolution Training for Nursing Staff (Riverton Memorial Hospital)
• Board Planning Retreat (Child Development Services of Fremont County)

The fourth "P" is PATRONAGE.

We have an incredible wealth of expertise and entrepreneurial spirit at the colleges, and the colleges are connected to their communities. We need to invest in those wonderful resources for a greater payoff in workforce development. We need to support community colleges.

More patronage means more resources! Our challenges are as follows:

• Obtain more state funding for a growing college role in workforce development and to meet regional need—our state funding for workforce development brings to mind another "P"…pathetic!
• We need greater state-level support for the community colleges as the preferred training provider
• Development of a funding process that is more sensitive to differences in regional workforce training needs
• Greater awareness of community colleges as viable employee development resources
• More readily available resources for marketing, staffing, curriculum development, equipment, and facilitator certification (Wyoming's community colleges are little known "gems" of our great state)

• Sufficient resources for identifying and serving the myriad of training needs for a technology-driven workforce
• Additional staffing and resources to track completers and collect reliable follow-up performance information
• More realistic expectations of students for job placement after program completion
• More work at the federal level, including support for "tried and true" programs, such as the Carl Perkins Act

But we at the community colleges can do a lot more to help ourselves.

• The community colleges have to prove that we are as capable as private training entities in providing high quality/caliber, leading-edge training programs
• The community colleges have to allow customized training/workforce development departments within the college system the flexibility they need to operate "outside the box" of the traditional educational models, tuition/fees, and schedules.

The fifth "P" is PASSION. We have to continue to believe that every human being has dignity and worth and that all Wyoming citizens deserve an opportunity to lead useful and productive lives. In our zeal to prepare our citizens for high-paying jobs (and to reduce the gender pay gap), I hope we do NOT stick with 220% of the federal poverty level to measure what jobs are worthy of training. That would mean that a family of three would require $34,000 a year. Folks, I'm embarrassed to say that at Central Wyoming College in Fremont County, $34,000 is more than our master's prepared beginning faculty salary make. These highly qualified beginning faculty members start at $32,000 per year. These kinds of unrealistic salaries are going to leave behind single mothers, who would be delighted to make even $24,000. Let's not leave them out.

We have to believe what we say—to make our programs match our rhetoric. We can develop a skilled and productive workforce if we have a shared mission, and, more importantly, if we have the passion to make it come true.

So, in conclusion, we need the five "Ps":

1. PARTNERSHIPS

2. PATHWAYS

3. PLANNING

4. PATRONAGE

5. PASSION

With these five "P's," we can bring about another "P" in terms of PROGRESS toward enhanced career-technical education.

History of Carl Perkins Act. The Carl Perkins Act has a long history, and it is a highly effective "workhorse" of a federal program that is extremely accountable. The Perkins Act has had the flexibility to morph from its original vocational education roots into a program for enhancing career and technical education in the secondary schools and at community colleges to prepare today's students for tomorrow's jobs. The Carl Perkins had its genesis in the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917, which represented the first federal legislation that specifically funded vocational education. In 1931 the National Advisory Committee on Education was established and supported legislation to further increase funding, first through the George-Ellzey Act in 1934 and then in the George-Deen Act of 1936. The Vocational Education Act of 1963 again increased vocational funding and permitted states flexibility in the development of programs. Amendments were added in 1968 and 1972, and in 1984, the act was renamed after Carl Perkins. The Perkins Act was reauthorized in 1990 and again in 1997. Although the program is old, it has not lost its relevance to today's knowledge-based, technologically advanced, and global economy.

Limited "small state minimum." We are also very concerned about the limited funding to Wyoming, which is based on the "small state minimum" awarded to six states, including Wyoming, and which has not been increased since 1994. This limited funding does not come close to the 43% inflation factor during this time, especially with equipment and technical costs on the rise.

Perkins funds at work. Wyoming currently receives $4.2 million in Perkins funds, as the "small state minimum". The state has not have seen an increase in career technical education (CTE) funding since 1994 and the program has been negatively impacted by the 43% inflationary increase over the last decade. Increasing national funding levels or at least maintaining them is just critical.

Perkins funds, even though small, have a significant impact on career technical education (CTE) program operations in Wyoming community colleges and range from 12 – 50% of their total CTE budgets. These funds are used to support various aspects of vocational education including enhancing communication and technological literacy skills; acquisition of technological equipment and specialized software to industry standards; individualized tutoring; internships; at-risk student interventions; direct assistance to members of special populations (single parents, single pregnant women, displaced homemakers, special needs students); and job-embedded faculty development training.

Without Perkins' support, these special services and programs would not exist. Since the estimates are that 80% of our population will not need a four-year degree to be trained for the jobs that will exist in the 21st century, and since we continue to import workers in these CTE areas in response to employers' demands, it makes excellent economic sense to "grow our own." The funding allotted to Perkins is minor compared to the benefits to our national and state economies and the taxes that these self-sufficient students will pay in the future. They also will not be absorbing state and national funding through welfare assistance.

In the past two years, Perkins funds have benefited 25 – 34% of all enrolled college

students, and have touched almost 65% of the total number of graduates from Wyoming colleges. Success of the CTE programs directly affect the number of trained graduates entering the workforce.

Perkins success stories. Wyoming's community colleges have many success stories of graduates and currently enrolled students that were realized due to Perkins funding assistance. Following are a few examples.

Example 1:

April was divorced in 1992, with one child. She decided to return to school, and applied for all the grants she could get. While a student at Central Wyoming College (CWC), she received Perkins funding for books, transportation, child care, clothing. She also received counseling and support from the Perkins funded staff person that was invaluable in helping her deal with parenting and other personal issues, etc. She persisted in school and graduated from CWC in 1995 as a valedictorian with an AAS in Data Processing, a Certificate in Accounting and in Microcomputers. She worked for Fremont Counseling for 6 years, Wyoming Services for Independent Living for 2 years, and began working for CWC in April 2004. Without the Perkins assistance, she may have been a continuing burden on tax payers instead of being established productive worker she is today.

Example 2:

Christie is a single mother with two children who began attending CWC in 2001 and graduated in 2003 with an AA in Surgical Technology. She encountered numerous personal problems while attending CWC but persisted in school due to the additional financial assistance and counseling available through the Perkins program. During the fall semester of her final year, she moved her family to the small town of Pinedale, 180 miles away from the main campus in Riverton, to be close to the clinical site in Jackson. She drove to Riverton for classes on Monday and Tuesday, drove to Jackson for clinicals on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, then to Pinedale for the weekend to be with her children. During spring semester, her clinical site changed and she moved the family to Rock Springs, 150 miles in a different direction, to do the clinicals there. She is currently gainfully employed at a hospital in Kemmerer, again, thanks to the support of the Perkins program.

Example 3:

Christa is currently enrolled at CWC completing her two-year degree program in Business Management and is scheduled to graduate next semester. She is a twenty-four year old single mother with a seven year old son under her care. The Perkins Grant has helped her out with that little extra assistance needed throughout the semester and helped her gain employable skills. She is deeply grateful for the opportunity to turn her life around.

Example 4:

Michelle is a single parent of three sons who is enrolled in the Dental Assisting program at Sheridan College. With assistance from the Perkins grant, she was able to attend

college and develop her employability, communications and thinking skills. Through the tutoring assistance she receives, she has a better understanding of the difficult concepts involved in her technical education program. She can now acquire an education that will enable her to support herself and her sons. Her successes are an encouragement to others who look to her as a role model.

Example 5:

A student who attended Eastern Wyoming College (EWC) to major in welding and joining technology was often the only female in her welding skills classes. When asked "What difficulties did you experience in working in a gender unequal field?" she quickly responded that thanks to the support system established by the Perkins programs, she never felt "out of place" or discouraged, and soon considered herself to be "just one of the guys". This young lady worked on breaks and over summers in the coal industry mechanic shops as a welder. She made excellent money and gained invaluable work experience. She went on to graduate from the EWC program and works in the industry. She has a new goal of becoming a welding instructor herself someday.

Example 6:

A 41-year-old married carpenter with 5 teenage children needed to change occupations because of wear and tear on his knees. He needed a training program that would give him the salary to support his family of 7 and a major that would require the minimum amount of time to complete and return him to the workforce. This man chose the nursing profession, spent two years completing his pre-requisite courses while he continued to work as a carpenter and was then accepted into the nursing program. He completed the program while working part-time as a licensed practical nurse, and graduated in May 2003 with his RN degree and a GPA over 3.75! He is now working as a registered nurse in a local hospital, and all this was made possible by the Perkins funds that assisted him with his tuition, books and supplies.

Example 7:

A young mother with two toddlers registered in the criminal justice program in the fall of 2003. In November, her husband's reserve unit was called to Iraq. Alone now with their children, she has a sharply decreased family income and has no way to pay for her tuition, books, and supplies. The Perkins funds is paying for her college attendance costs and providing extensive support services to alleviate some of the separation stress and anxiety from her husband's absence and his dangerous mission.

Example 8:

Jeremy is a special needs vocational student at Western Wyoming College. He received classroom accommodations through Perkins programs for his learning disabilities. The Perkins staff made arrangements to have "hands-on" training in a co-op educational setting that proved to be very valuable. Jeremy is currently employed with the same

business on a permanent basis, and is grateful for the assistance he received.

Other Perkins services and benefits. Perkins-funded equipment and professional development activities have helped several of our photography students publish their work in national photography magazines, even before they graduated from the college. This exposure and recognition has launched these students into successful careers with major corporations across the United States. Other students chose to use this exposure as the foundation for opening their own businesses. Similarly, journalism students have won national awards for the newspaper and web casts they have produced with the help of Perkins funded equipment. Students have learned and demonstrated professional performance abilities in these competitive fields.

Reauthorization Proposal. In its 2005 budget request, the administration has proposed a reorganization of the Vocational Education programs as part of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998 (Perkins III), which expires in fiscal year 2005. Under the new proposal, existing programs would be replaced by a new secondary and technical education program designed to "shift from providing traditional vocational education to a stronger focus on supporting high levels of academic achievement at the high school level in the context of career and technical education programs offered in conjunction with postsecondary education and training partners." While the U. S. Department of Education's goal (number 5) from its 2002-2007 Strategic Plan affirms, "Enhance the quality of and access to postsecondary education", the Reauthorization proposal brings into question if the Department of Education appropriately distinguishes the federal role between supporting K-12 and postsecondary education. If enacted, the reduced support for the postsecondary level will hurt deserving adult students, and in turn slow down efforts of rebuilding the national economy.

Issues with the proposed reauthorization:

1. Reauthorization process gives us a unique opportunity to define the overarching purpose of the Perkins Act. It should be restated to focus on economic development through improvement in career and technical education (CTE) programs serving high demand occupations.

2. The proposal for reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act has been renamed the Carl D. Perkins Secondary and Technical Education Excellence Act, indicating in not so subtle terms, an emphasis towards secondary education. With this approach, the Department of Education has introduced the "uses of funds" language for Basic State Grants geared towards secondary education and is practically unrelated to the needs of adult students attending community colleges. The proposal fails to recognize the role of postsecondary institutions in serving members of the society who are beyond high school age.

3. A number of reports show higher earning capacities for workers with postsecondary education. Instead of focusing on secondary education in the reauthorization process, an increased support for the community college programs will help build a broad, more

effective career and technical education system that will serve current and future needs of secondary students, traditional college age students, and adult learners. With increasing global competition, especially in career-technology fields, it is prudent to stress education and skills beyond the secondary level.

Wyoming Department of Education consultants (Jacob et. al.) were quoted in a White Paper (March 13, 2003) Developing a Rationale for Wyoming's Carl Perkins Funding Split as making the following observations which are very apropos to the present discussion.

a. The nature of jobs in the modern economy requires greater career-technical education than can be offered at the secondary level alone.

b. More jobs require postsecondary credentials (certificates and associate degrees), net of experience and training, therefore the greatest benefit to the workforce is through postsecondary.

c. Vocational Course-taking in the high schools has remained steady and has not grown. The percentage of students taking three or more courses in a single occupational area has declined dramatically.

d. High schools should be places where students master a set of basic competencies necessary for all of adult life, rather than specializing in specific preparation for employment; this idea has been embedded in state high school exit examinations that focus on the basic academic subjects, and now in the exams required in the No Child Left Behind legislation.

4. Students attend community colleges for various reasons including skill attainment; retraining for emerging technologies; career assessment; advancing in current jobs; improving basic skills in English, reading, or math; earning credentials or certificates; transferring to another two- or four-year college; or, completing a degree program. The proposed Perkins Act focuses narrowly only on “completion” rates, more appropriate to secondary schools than to the community colleges.

5. Community colleges are uniquely organized to train and retrain students in career technical education fields, with goals parallel to those of the Perkins Act. Taxpayers’ dollars will therefore be better spent with the Perkins Act working more closely and in consort with community colleges, rather than appending with secondary education.

6. Secondary programs eligible for Perkins funding should be limited to those providing clear pathways to the acquisition of high-order skills and academic knowledge taught at the postsecondary level.

7. Community colleges routinely partner with a number of external entities including businesses, social agencies, adult education centers, school districts, baccalaureate institutions, etc., to meet the needs of their communities, maximizing investment returns

manifold. They are better suited to implement the Perkins initiatives holistically, guiding students to work, training, and/or further education.

8. Perkins funding has also supported Tech Prep pathways and assisted in developing working relationships, articulation agreements, and seamless educational pathways between certain secondary and post-secondary educational institutions. However, overall, coordination between secondary and postsecondary education over Tech Prep programs continues to be problematic. I support the AACC's view that the Tech Prep program should continue to foster education reform as a separate agenda item.

What we need is more patronage—more resources! Our challenges are as follows:

• Work for re-authorization of the Carl Perkins Act at an increased (NOT reduced) funding level;
• Increase the "small state minimum" in Perkins funding;
• Encourage high schools to focus on providing the academic basics, as well as career exploration, so that community colleges can focus on applied career and technical education through such mechanisms as dual enrollment;
• Ensure that community colleges serve as the primary partner for Carl Perkins funding in partnership with businesses and secondary schools.
• Require states to provide a defensible rationale for splitting Carl Perkins funding between community colleges and their secondary partners.
• Recognize that community colleges serve a broad base of students, averaging about 29 years of age that includes both traditional high school students and non-traditional older students.
• Do not allow a successful program, such as Perkins, to become mired in politics

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. Through this reauthorization process, I hope we can make decisions that will have lasting benefits in helping our youth and adults fulfill their career goals and participate with us in the American dream. I will be happy to answer any of your questions.

Lightsey
Reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act:
Education for the 21st Century Workforce
Bill Number:
Hearing Date: June 24, 2004, 10:00 am
Location: SD-430
Witness:
Harry Lightsey
BellSouth, South Carolina, Columbia, SC
President
Testimony

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am pleased to be here today to discuss with you the need to support career and technical

education by reauthorizing the funding for the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical program.

Four years ago a diesel systems technology company decided to build a facility to manufacture cutting edge diesel fuel injectors in the Midlands of South Carolina. They wanted to hire about 500 local people. But, the company couldn't find enough skilled workers. The first 1,000 applications were a combination of adults and recent high school graduates. The company hired about 50 of the applicants. Only 35 started work.

I share this story with you to illustrate the fact that today's workers do not have the skills for the modern workplace. Our current education system is not producing a future labor force with the higher level skills that technical businesses need to be successful in the competitive global economy. Plus, only 70 percent of the students who are enrolled in the eighth grade today will graduate from high school.

As a result, technical companies and other businesses suffer, even though desirable job opportunities, salaries and benefits are available. That impacts South Carolina's economy. Today, South Carolina's per capita income is only 80 percent of the national average. South Carolina's unemployment rate is the third highest in the nation.

To help resolve this problem, a coalition of business leaders are partnering with the South Carolina Department of Education to rebuild our economy around higher skilled, higher paying jobs by improving academic and technical skills of high school graduates entering the workforce and post secondary education. One of these companies, BellSouth recognized the need to help improve the quality of education in the Southeast by establishing a foundation in 1986. Strengthening the South's economy and improving the quality of life for all Southerners is dependent upon a highly-skilled workforce. Since its inception, the BellSouth Foundation has awarded 587 grants to 421 institutions totaling $46,400,000.

Recently, BellSouth and the BellSouth Foundation gave a $1 million grant to the SC Department of Education address the need for more workers with higher skill levels to help improve our economy. The grant helps fund two programs: Project Lead the Way and FIRST Robotics.

Project Lead the Way is a national program that forms partnerships among public high schools, higher education institutions and the private sector to increase the quantity and quality of engineers and engineering technologists. In South Carolina Project Lead the Way is a partnership between BellSouth, the South Carolina Department of Education, and the University of South Carolina School of Engineering. Project Lead the Way offers a four year sequence of courses which, when combined with traditional mathematics and science courses, introduces high school students to the disciplines of engineering and engineering technology. But, Project Lead the Way is not just for students interested in engineering, it is also for students interested in developing technical skills needed in our workforce. Currently, 52 schools in South Carolina participate in the program. We plan to grow that number to 100 by September, 2005.

The Project Lead The Way graduate is better prepared for engineering programs and more likely to be successful. In the 2002 Southern Regional Education Board NAEP Assessment, South Carolina led all 28 SREB states in Math, Science, and Reading Assessments. The majority of the South Carolina schools ASSESSED have the Project Lead the Way curriculum in place.

The other exciting program is FIRST, an acronym that stands for "For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology." FIRST, a national program, challenges high school students to work with professional engineering and business mentors to design and build a robot in six weeks. Each team must use the same kit of parts and a standard set of rules. Then, the students and their robots compete in an intense, action packed, two minute competition that measures the effectiveness of each robot, the power of team strategy and the collaboration and determination of students.

FIRST encourages students who may not be predisposed to science, math or technology to participate and it is designed to inspire, motivate and encourage students to learn basic principles while challenging more experienced students. Since there are critical roles for students in everything from design and building, to computer animation, to fundraising and research, every student can actively participate and benefit.

There are literally hundreds of examples how FIRST and Project Lead the Way have inspired students, especially women and minorities, to get involved in engineering, technical programs, and robotics. These students learn more than technical skills. They also learn skills that are desperately needed in our workforce like innovation, teamwork, project management, leadership and ethics.

Earlier this year, South Carolina hosted the inaugural Palmetto FIRST Regional Robotics Competition, where 42 teams of high school students from across the nation competed. Because of the excitement the FIRST competition generated in schools throughout the state, we've seen a 100 percent increase in the expansion of Project Lead the Way pre-engineering programs.

We need 21st Century Learning to encourage students to stay in school and actively learn skills for future jobs. There is so much noise in the world today. Our young people are bombarded from different directions, TV, video games, multidimensional technologies, instant messaging, etc. Asking them to sit in a conventional classroom to learn is asking the impossible for many. For real learning, we need to pick up these students and shake them with hands on learning. That is what Project Lead the Way and FIRST does.

Congress needs to encourage more private/public partnerships to help improve education in this nation and to help prepare our students to be successful in the world economy. For example, high schools could use "adjunct faculty" from technical schools and businesses to work with students on programs like FIRST. Businesses and the public sector should help improve the academic integrity of vocational and technical education programs at both the high school and post secondary schools to ensure these classes provide relevant

skills training for 21st Century jobs.

Another important factor is federal funding. Funding of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education program is critical. Our schools need the federal grant funds for career and technical education to shake up our young people so they can develop the skills to work in future technical careers.

Thank you.

Olszewski
Reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act: Education for the 21st Century Workforce
Bill Number:
Hearing Date: June 24, 2004, 10:00 am
Location: SD-430
Witness:
Angela Olszewski
Non Traditional Employment for Women, New York, NY
Journeywoman and Instructor
Testimony

Good Morning Chairman Gregg, Senator Kennedy, Chairman Enzi, Senator Murray, and other members of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions. Thank you for the invitation to appear before you today to discuss the issue of nontraditional employment in the reauthorization of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational-Technical Education Act.

My name is Angela Olszewski. I am a member of Local Union No.7, Tile, Marble & Terrazzo of NY & NJ. My Local belongs to the International Union of Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers. I am a union Tile-Setter, a Tradeswomen's Advocate & Educator, and a 1999 graduate of a Blue Collar Prep program with Nontraditional Employment for Women (NEW) in New York City.

I came here today to tell you that the only way that I was able to get into an apprenticeship with Local No.7 was because of the training, support, and assistance of NEW. I found out about NEW in 1995, from friends who thought I would be a good match for working in the building trades, but at that time you had to be collecting unemployment or be on public assistance in order to be enrolled at NEW. That was not my situation and, so I kept NEW in the back of my mind and I continued working jobs which paid between $8-$12 an hour. I came to NEW in 1999, after being laid off from a Seasonal Clerical Associates position with New York City's Parks & Recreation Department. When the season was over, I took my lay-off and my soon to be unemployment assistance and I went straight to NEW, and enrolled in their Blue Collar Prep program.

I was so excited about entering NEW's program, and I knew that my life was going to be changed by this opportunity. The program ran full-time for 12 weeks. I learned about

current opportunities in the building trades. I gained confidence in my abilities in the shop class. I practiced entrance exams and interviews. I improved my physical conditioning, and I felt solidly determined to get into the tile setter's union.

In my case, NEW had to broker a deal with a union contractor and a union official in order to secure an apprenticeship for me. It was known that this contractor had gotten a job in which the project labor agreement required quotas for the number of women and people of color to be employed. I made my application with the local and through NEW's persistence & persuasion the union and the contractor decided to give me a chance. I was accepted into the union's 12-week pre-job tile training program at a facility in Long Island City. I was the only woman in my class, and except for the secretary, I was the only woman at the entire training facility, which also ran pre-job training programs in Marble, Brick, Restoration, & Stone Crafts.

I was accepted into the tile setter apprenticeship in 2000, and in 2001, while I was still an apprentice, I was appointed to my International Union's Women's Task Force. The mission of the Task Force is to propose policy suggestions for the better recruitment and retention of women in the BAC. In 2002, I worked with Tradeswomen Now and Tomorrow at the Building & Construction Trades Conference here in Washington, DC. I have also worked with a program called Construction Skills 2000, which discusses careers in the building trades to high school age girls and boys in the NYC public school system.

In 2003, I completed my apprenticeship, and for the past two years I have also been employed part-time as the Job Readiness Instructor for NEW's evening training program. In my class, I share my strategies for completing a successful apprenticeship. I have spoken to hundreds of women who have trained for careers in the building trades. The material in my class is prepared straight out of my experience as a tradeswoman. I cover topics such as dealing with isolation, sexual harassment, and how to effectively monitor the progress of your apprenticeship to make sure you are getting access to skills when training on the job.

These high-skill, high wage jobs are very rewarding. I have worked on the new construction of many high rise luxury hotels & residences. I have installed marble bathrooms and granite kitchens. I have worked with cement and quarry tiles in large restaurant kitchens. I have even installed glass mosaic tiles inside a swimming pool. My financial rewards from this career are incredible to me. I joke to my friends that I now pay in taxes the amount I used to earn for a living. Let me take you through my annual income for the past 4 years as a tile setter. First Year Apprentice: $18,000. Second Year Apprentice: $32,000. Third Year Apprentice: $46,000. Journeyworker: $55,000.

In recognizing how extremely challenging it can be for women to enter these fields, it is with deep gratitude to NEW that I am dedicated to the work I do on construction sites, as an activist, and as an instructor. NEW has been around for 25 years, but unfortunately the obstacles and conditions, which prevent women from entering and succeeding in these careers, still exist. Graduates of NEW constitute the majority of women hard hats in New

York City. Without NEW's services, most of these women would not be in the skilled trades, and neither would I.

Many of the men that I work with have family in the construction business, who provide significant assistance to their entry into the trades and allow them to bypass some of the formal requirements. However, few women are able to enter the trades this way – their path is often much more difficult. I have seen men brought right into this industry, and I have seen women fill out an application only to be told to wait & maybe we will get back to you.

In the summer of 2001, my International Union participated in the Smithsonian Folklife Festival here in DC. I was invited to be part of a living exhibit called The Masters of the Building Trades. We demonstrated our crafts while people stepped forward to ask questions about it. I was so proud to be there, because I showed every little girl who passed by, one more choice in her life.