

May 17, 2017

The Honorable Virginia Foxx
Chair

The Honorable Bobby Scott
Ranking Member

House Committee on Education and the Workforce
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Foxx and Ranking Member Scott:

On behalf of the nation's 1,108 community colleges, including their presidents and boards of trustees, we write to commend the Education and Workforce Committee for acting to reauthorize the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE) Act (Perkins Act). In particular, we would like to thank Representatives Thompson and Krishnamoorthi for introducing the bipartisan Strengthening CTE for the 21st Century Act (H.R. 2353).

The Perkins Act provides vital support for community colleges in their core mission of educating the nation's increasingly technically-oriented workforce. It is the largest direct federal funding source for community colleges. H.R. 2353 makes many improvements to the Perkins Act.

From the beginning of the reauthorization process, our associations have stressed the need for Perkins Act funding to be used to support programs closely aligned with the needs of business and industry. We are pleased that H.R. 2353 reflects this priority. This is done in part by encouraging states and local recipients to better coordinate activities supported by the Perkins Act with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and by requiring needs assessments to guide the expenditure of Perkins funding at the local level.

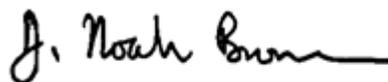
The postsecondary performance indicators are also better aligned with WIOA's accountability measures, which marks a significant improvement in federal workforce policy. The legislation seeks to provide much-needed consistency in this area by basing the performance indicators on newly-defined "CTE concentrators." We hope to continue working with the committee to refine this definition to ensure that it best captures those students who have shown that they are indeed CTE concentrators through their course-taking behavior.

Finally, we applaud the language in H.R. 2253 that ensures postsecondary Perkins Act funds continue to be focused on the sub-baccalaureate level, as has always been the case. Given the tremendous growth in "middle skill" jobs and the resources available elsewhere to support baccalaureate and advance degree programs, this remains the proper focus for the Perkins Act.

Sincerely,



Walter G. Bumphus
AACCC President and CEO



J. Noah Brown
ACCT President and CEO