



Construction Industry Round Table

Legislative News

A force for positive change in the design / construction industry

7/06/2016 – CIRT Supports Workforce/Career Perkins Act Renewal

As part of CIRT's on-going initiative to address concerns regarding "skilled/craft trades" and industry workforce needs, the Round Table has aligned with an industry based group in support of a bill in Congress on the matter. The U.S. House Education and Workforce Committee is moving forward with reauthorization of the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act – now renamed the *Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act*. The bill, which was introduced just last week, is scheduled to move through the committee on Thursday (07/07/16). The organizations supporting this reform package as part of the reauthorization process are hoping House action will create some new momentum, spurring the Senate to resolve their differences and produce a bill that can then be reconciled and sent to the President for his signature.

The *Opportunity America Jobs and Careers Coalition*, a business group focused on job training and workforce development, praised the proposed legislation for "driving improvements in career education: [particularly with] . . . incentives for CTE programs to incorporate work-based learning and recogni[zing] . . . the value of industry-driven occupational certifications." [Bracketed material added]. Moreover, it was noted that all industries including the construction community "count on local educational institutions – high schools and community colleges – to prepare the workforce we need to keep our businesses growing and contributing to the economy. We know *employers have a role to play* in helping to provide career education, informing educators about changing labor needs and collaborating with them to build and maintain effective programs." [See, [Letter for details](#)]. And even though a relatively small amount in terms of federal programs, the \$1.13 billion dollars can be leveraged to expand alternative career paths, while establishing a precedent for future allocations from the nearly \$140 billion spent by the federal government on "traditional" college/university related programs. [See, [Summary Paper on the bill](#)].

UPDATE: 7/07/2016 – House Committee Passes Unanimously

In a rare show of total bi-partisan support, on Thursday (7/07/2016), the House Committee on Education & Workforce Committee reported-out legislation reauthorizing the Perkins Act, The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act. The Committee passed the bill by a vote of 37-0.