



Construction Industry Round Table

Legislative News

A force for positive change in the design / construction industry

[UPDATE: 09/21/2016]

09/21/2016 – Senate Takes-Up Career & Technical Education Act

The U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP), has taken up the reauthorization of the Perkins Act (H.R. 5587). A bipartisan group of Senators have been working since December to provide a draft that is scheduled for a markup so that the legislation can be brought to the floor for a full Senate vote (most likely during a lame-duck session after the November elections).

9/13/2016 – Career Education Act Wins Approval in U.S. House

Today, the U.S. House of Representatives passed on an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote of 405-5, “*The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act*” (H.R. 5587) which reforms and reauthorizes the “*Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006.*” Formerly referred to as “vocational education” the reconceived and renamed “career and technical education” or CTE has emerged in the past decade as one of the most promising approaches to preparing students for the future. CIRT joined with the “Opportunity America Jobs and Career Coalition” to promote this legislation and supported the reforms it offers. In particular the provisions of most interest include: (1) incentivizing programs that prepare students for high-skill, high-wage, in-demand jobs – not the old, usually irrelevant “Home Ec” or “Wood Shop” variety; (2) requires robust consultation between educators and employers, giving business a say in setting state performance goals and assessing skills in demand at the local level; (3) incentivizes programs that lead to attainment of “recognized post-secondary credentials,” including industry-recognized certifications; (4) incentivizes programs that incorporate work-based learning, including internships and other on-the-job experience; and (5) gives states more flexibility to use federal funding to meet local educational needs, including use of competitive grant programs to foster innovation.

Bottom line: Businesses, such as those in our design/construction community, have been clamoring for more alternatives to the traditional four-year college path to prepare students to enter our industry. This bill, with its reforms that invite in the business community help direct dollars to successful and needed programs, does just that.