



Reasons to Celebrate

The Smith-Hughes Act and the Future of CTE

THEN

When the Smith-Hughes Act was first passed by Congress, it addressed a limited number of vocational fields important to the 1917 American economy, including agriculture, home economics and trade and industrial education.

The Smith-Hughes Act authorized the first federal funding for secondary CTE programs around the nation at \$1.7 million for its first year.

The Smith-Hughes Act essentially promoted vocational education for occupations available directly after high school as an alternative to education that prepared students for postsecondary education.

NOW

CTE continues to support development of the knowledge and skills needed to sustain and grow the American economy. Today's CTE covers a huge range of careers including sectors such as biosciences, financial services, and information technology. Even traditional fields have evolved with the times to include sectors such as agri-science, advanced manufacturing, and transportation, distribution and logistics.

Congress provides \$1.1 billion annually to support secondary and postsecondary CTE. That's a significant increase but not when considering cost of living increases, increases in demand and number of students who enroll in CTE courses, and CTE's relationship to employer needs. Funding must be increased to support the needs of today and tomorrow!

The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act maintains a robust CTE system throughout the United States that supports state and local education agency efforts as they develop programs of study for students. Programs of study address the academic, technical and employability skills that students need in today's workplace and civic society, include rigorous academics and secondary-postsecondary connections, and end with meaningful credentials of value.