

Ensure the Infrastructure Package Includes Workforce Development

Bipartisan Letter Led by the Co-chairs of the Career and Technical Education Caucus and Building Trades Caucus

Supported by North America's Building Trades Union (NABTU), Associated General Contractors (AGC), Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE), Advance CTE, Opportunity America

Dear Colleague:

We invite you to join us in sending a letter to House leadership urging them to include investments in workforce development strategies, including career and technical education (CTE) and apprenticeships, in any infrastructure improvement package considered during the 116th Congress.

Rebuilding our nation's infrastructure will require more than investments in bridges, roads, and waterways; it will require the development of a workforce that can design, build, and maintain that infrastructure. The Brookings Institute estimates that 3 million additional workers will be needed for the nation's infrastructure in the next decade, and Transportation Secretary Chao has testified that "we will probably not have enough skilled trades workers to address all the infrastructure needs."

CTE and apprenticeships are proven strategies that provide individuals with the education and work-based learning they need for success in high-skill, high-demand infrastructure sectors and occupations. By including these investments, we will ensure that resources committed to our nation's infrastructure will be effective, building on established workforce development strategies to provide the skilled workers required to carry out the projects. Therefore, we respectfully request that House Leadership consider the following in any infrastructure legislation:

- a stipulation that states devote a portion of funds to workforce development programs, with the flexibility to invest in programs they deem appropriate for local infrastructure needs;
- incentives for infrastructure-related businesses to invest in apprenticeship programs; and
- resources for updating the facilities and equipment used in CTE programs in infrastructure sectors.

Please contact Kerry McKittrick with Rep. Langevin at Kerry.Mckittrick@mail.house.gov or Nick Rockwell with Rep. Thompson at Nick.Rockwell@mail.house.gov with any questions or to sign on. The deadline is **COB Friday, April 5.**

Sincerely,

JIM LANGEVIN
Member of Congress

GLENN "GT" THOMPSON
Member of Congress

DONALD NORCROSS
Member of Congress

DAVID B. MCKINLEY, P.E.
Member of Congress

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, Chairman DeFazio and Ranking Member Graves:

As you craft legislation to strengthen our nation's infrastructure, we respectfully request that you include investments in proven workforce development strategies, including career and technical education (CTE) and apprenticeships.

Rebuilding our nation's infrastructure will require more than just bridges, roads, and waterways; it will require the development of a skilled workforce that can design, build, and maintain that infrastructure. The Brookings Institution estimates that 3 million additional workers will be needed for the nation's infrastructure in the next decade, including designing, building and operating transportation, housing, utilities and telecommunications¹. On March 6, 2018, during a House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee hearing on the President's infrastructure proposal, Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao testified, "we probably will not have enough skilled trades workers to be able to address all the infrastructure needs when it finally gets all going... So, the workforce training and retraining part is important."

Many jobs in infrastructure sectors do not require a bachelor's degree, but they do involve a significant amount of on-the-job training. CTE and apprenticeships are proven strategies that can provide individuals with the education and work-based learning they need for career success in these high-skill, high-wage industry sectors or occupations. By including these investments in a comprehensive infrastructure package, we will ensure that resources committed to our nation's infrastructure will be effective, building on established workforce development strategies to provide the skilled workers required to carry out the projects.

Congress recently recognized CTE as an effective workforce development strategy when it unanimously passed the *Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act* (reauthorizing the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act), which the President subsequently signed into law (Public Law No: 115-224). We must maintain this commitment moving forward. Therefore, we respectfully request that you include the following in any infrastructure legislation:

- A stipulation that states devote a portion of the infrastructure funds they receive to workforce development programs, including CTE programs, with the flexibility to invest in such programs they deem appropriate for local infrastructure needs, and that they coordinate such investments with the agencies that receive the states' funds from the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and Carl D. Perkins CTE Act so as not to duplicate efforts;
- Incentives for infrastructure-related businesses that invest in work-based learning, including apprenticeship programs; and
- Dedicated resources for updating the facilities and equipment used in CTE programs of study in infrastructure sectors to ensure they are aligned with fast-paced, ever-changing industry expectations and standards.

We appreciate your consideration of these requests and look forward to working with you to ensure these items are included in the nation-wide infrastructure package. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, please contact Kerry McKittrick with Congressman Langevin or Nick Rockwell with Congressman Thompson.

Sincerely,

¹ Kane, Joseph and Adie Tomer. *Infrastructure skills: Knowledge, tools, and training to increase opportunity* (May 2016). Retrieved from: https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/metro_20160510_infrastructure_skills_report.pdf.