

April XX, 2019

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Education and
Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Education
and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray,

As you develop the Fiscal Year 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill, we urge you to provide robust funding for the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins), Basic State Grant program (Title I). Perkins provides the principal source of federal support for program improvement, and helps to strengthen the integration of academic and career and technical education (CTE) at secondary and postsecondary institutions.

Perkins CTE programs provide a substantial return on investment while consistently evolving to meet the needs of students and employers. These programs teach students transferable skills to ensure college and career readiness, and retrain adult workers who need to adapt their skills for a changing job market. Providing a robust investment in Perkins would support the 12 million CTE students across the country, the business community that relies on a qualified workforce, and the future economic competitiveness of our country.

We are pleased that Perkins Basic State Grants were funded at \$1.263 billion in Fiscal Year (FY) 19, but this funding still has not kept pace with the growing demand for CTE. Adjusted for inflation, FY19 levels were \$700 million lower than they were fifteen years ago. We must do more to support high schools, technical centers, and community colleges across the country. The erosion of Perkins funding has resulted in CTE institutions providing fewer opportunities for teacher professional development, deferring purchase of up-to-date industry-standard equipment for the classroom, and limiting program capacity despite growing student-demand.

Furthermore, the passage of the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, now Public Law No.: 115-224, reaffirmed Congress' commitment to CTE. Implementing the law's new requirements around accountability, equity, and program quality will require a significant investment of resources at the state and local levels. This makes it even more essential that Perkins receive robust funding in FY20.

For the many reasons outlined here, we respectfully request that the Perkins State Grant program receive robust funding for FY20. Thank you for your continued leadership and your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,