

2022 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

1. Increase Federal Investments in CTE

- **Significantly increase funding for the Perkins Basic State Grant.**

The Perkins Basic State Grant program is the principal source of dedicated federal funding for CTE, which helps build the capacity of secondary and postsecondary institutions to serve millions of students nationwide. In FY 2022, Perkins was funded at just \$1.38 billion, or approximately 1.8% of the total federal investment in education. Increasing Perkins funding will expand access to high-quality CTE programs to a greater number of secondary, postsecondary and adult learners. Therefore, we urge Congress to support our students and future workforce by **significantly increasing funding for the Perkins Basic State Grant program in FY 2023.**

- **Make long overdue contributions to the nation's workforce systems to aid economic recovery.**

In 2021, Congress proposed **\$40 billion in investments for CTE and workforce systems** in the Build Back Better Act. This investment would have included an additional \$700 million for the Perkins Act, \$5 billion for a Community College and Industry Partnership grant program, and \$1.2 billion for the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training program. This funding is much needed to close the nation's longstanding skills gap, supply enough trained workers to rebuild the nation's infrastructure, and upskill and reskill Americans whose careers were disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. We request that Congress find a vehicle to **pass funding that is urgently needed for these critical programs.**

2. Enhance Education Programs to Promote U.S. Global Competitiveness

- **Expand the Pell Grant to high-quality short-term certificate programs.**

Short-term certificate programs allow students to quickly gain skills and credentials that lead to substantial wage gains and increased career opportunities in high-demand fields. The **JOBS Act (S. 864/H.R. 2037)** is a bipartisan proposal that would expand eligibility to students who are seeking these certificates at high-quality public postsecondary institutions. The America COMPETES Act of 2022 (H.R. 4521), as passed in the House, was amended to include language similar to the JOBS Act, but the companion Senate bill does not include a short-term Pell provision. We ask Congress to **include short-term Pell in the final competitiveness package** that will be negotiated this spring.

- **Increase educators' ability to access data on student-level postsecondary outcomes.**

Educators need access to accurate and timely data on student outcomes to ensure programs are meeting learner and employer needs. Moreover, students deserve clarity about the postsecondary options available to them, including accurate information about the careers and salaries that may be

available to them upon graduation. The **College Transparency Act (S. 839/H.R. 2030)** would eliminate the ban on federal student-unit-record data, allowing for the tracking of program-level employment outcomes and information on certificates, licenses and industry-recognized certifications earned by students. Language from this legislation was also included in the recently passed America COMPETES Act of 2022 (H.R. 4521). We ask Congress to **include the College Transparency Act in the final competitiveness package** that will be negotiated this spring.

3. Strengthen Connections Between Education and Workforce Development Systems

- **Better align workforce policy with education programs.**

Our workforce and education systems should be built to operate symbiotically, not in silos. As Congress prepares for reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, we ask that the legislative language **better connect education and workforce programs**, increase access to high-quality training, use relevant labor market information to ensure programs reflect local economic needs, and provide adequate resources and support services for underserved populations. Further, we ask that Congress expand and promote access to registered apprenticeships, including youth and pre-apprenticeships, by **reauthorizing the National Apprenticeship Act**.

4. Support the Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of CTE Educators

- **Improve data collection on the CTE educator pipeline.**

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated preexisting teacher and staffing shortages and has further depleted the teacher pipeline at all levels of education, including in CTE. However, data on CTE shortages are lacking in comparison to other education specialties. ACTE urges the federal government to **improve federal-level data collection on CTE teachers and on teacher shortages in specific CTE subjects at the secondary and postsecondary levels** so that relevant policies can be developed.

- **Prioritize CTE educators in the creation and improvement of teacher recruitment and retention programs.**

Teachers at all levels experience unacceptable financial barriers to enter and remain in the workforce, such as student loan debt and chronically low pay. While in need of improvement, current programs that provide financial benefits to teachers such as TEACH Grants and the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program have been critical to incentivizing new teachers to enter the workforce with less debt. In addition to preserving and improving the quality of these programs, we must **ensure that all Higher Education Act Title II programs are more accessible to CTE teachers and prioritize CTE educators as a critical shortage area**. Further, the RAISE Act of 2022, which will be introduced later this spring, would give all public school teachers a federal tax reimbursement up to \$15,000 depending on the school poverty level. This would be a transformative change to significantly boost teacher pay and fill shortages in high-need school districts. We urge Congress to **pass the RAISE Act**.

About ACTE

The Association for Career and Technical Education® (ACTE®) is the nation's largest not-for-profit association committed to the advancement of education that prepares youth and adults for successful careers. ACTE represents the community of CTE professionals, including educators, administrators, researchers, school counselors, guidance and career development professionals and others at all levels of education. ACTE is committed to excellence in providing advocacy, public awareness and access to resources, professional development and leadership opportunities.

ACTE Public Policy Staff Contacts

- Alisha Hyslop, Senior Director of Public Policy, ahyslop@acteonline.org, 727-642-0491
- Zach Curtis, Government Relations Manager, zcurtis@acteonline.org, 831-566-3884
- Jori Houck, Media Relations and Advocacy Associate, jhouck@acteonline.org, 814-799-4812

Updated: March 2022