

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 10, 2020

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Chairwoman  
Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee  
House Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Ranking Member  
Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee  
House Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

We write to request your continued support for federal workforce programs authorized by the bipartisan Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the National Apprenticeship Act (NAA). As you consider the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Appropriations Act, we respectfully request that you provide substantial investments in job training programs in the final bill.

Across the country, workers are seeking opportunities to provide for themselves and their families. At the same time, businesses are eager to hire skilled workers—people trained for jobs in rapidly growing industries like healthcare, medical technology, IT and software, and advanced manufacturing, as well as tradespeople like plumbers and electricians.

In 2014, Congress demonstrated broad bipartisan support to address the challenges in our labor market through job training programs by passing the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. WIOA outlines a vision for a demand-driven workforce system that is responsive to the needs of employers and can help workers access jobs and credentials, and its funding is critical to the success of this mission. FY 2021 reflects a critical point in our nation's workforce investment strategy, with states and localities implementing the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and adapting to the final regulations. Unfortunately, this bipartisan vision has been blunted by disinvestment in the last two decades, underinvestment compared to our international peers, and funding levels that do not meet needs of workers or businesses today.

Despite efforts to get our economy back on track since the Great Recession, many working families are still struggling to make ends meet. Wages are stagnant while people are facing rising rent prices, inaccessible transportation, and skyrocketing childcare costs. And entire sectors of our economy are on the brink of significant transformation and workers are on the frontlines. Since 2014, investments in state grants under WIOA have declined by almost 40 percent. We need to rapidly scale up our investments in workforce development to recognize the future of work. Our workforce development system is tasked with making sure that all workers, particularly those with barriers to employment, have the skills they need for these jobs and meaningful employment.

According to a 2019 report from the White House Council of Economic Advisers, the U.S. would need to invest \$80 billion more each year just to reach the median level of investment in

workforce development of other industrialized nations. In the next decade, technological changes in our workplaces will likely require workers in 60 percent of current jobs to reskill or upskill to stay competitive. This means more than 100 million workers will need investment in their skills to succeed in jobs of the 21st century. We need to invest today, so that the workers have the skills and support services need to succeed in the jobs of tomorrow.

Industry or sector partnerships help address the skills gap by bringing together employers, education organizations, training, labor, and community-based organizations to develop work-based learning programs. Employers can align training with the skills they need, and workers learn while they earn.

Investing in workforce programs – and the support services necessary for workers to succeed in them – will improve our nation’s economic competitiveness and support national priorities, such as rebuilding our infrastructure. With meaningful investments, programs across the nation will help workers gain the skills to support themselves and their families and make sure employers will have access to the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy.

Specifically, we respectfully request that you:

- Fund WIOA Title I formula and national employment and training programs at the 2001 levels adjusted for inflation so states, localities, and other partners can fully realize the bipartisan vision outlined by WIOA;
- Support adult education and literacy programs under WIOA Title II at the 2001 levels adjusted for inflation so Americans can take advantage of emerging economic opportunities;
- Provide no less than \$680 million to Wagner/Peyser Employment Services activities under Title III of WIOA to give states necessary, additional resources to operate WIOA’s intensive reemployment services;
- Fund vocational rehabilitation program and other employment services at levels authorized under WIOA Title IV for adults and students with disabilities;
- Reinvest current levels in the Workforce Data Quality Initiative Grants to enable states to provide useful information about skills, employment, and earning outcomes to help businesses fill skilled positions;
- Expand apprenticeship programs registered under the National Apprenticeship Act by increasing Congressional investment to \$300 million for FY 2021; and
- Provide \$1.9 million for the Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations program to help employers and labor unions recruit, train, and retain women for nontraditional employment opportunities.

Thank you for your attention to these critical issues. We look forward to continuing to work with you to invest in workforce programs to provide workers with meaningful pathways to better paying jobs and connect employers with workers who have the skills they need to thrive in a global economy.

Sincerely,



Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress



Lisa Blunt Rochester  
Member of Congress



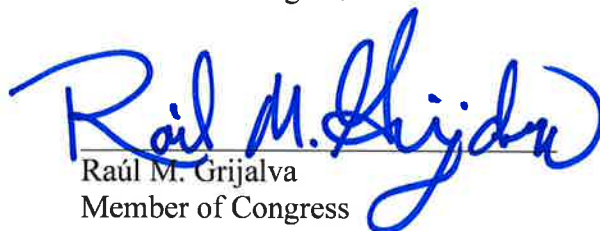
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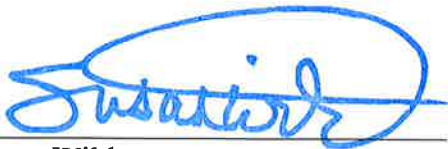
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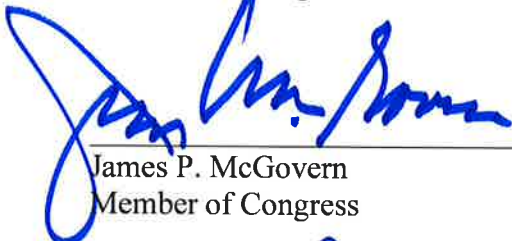
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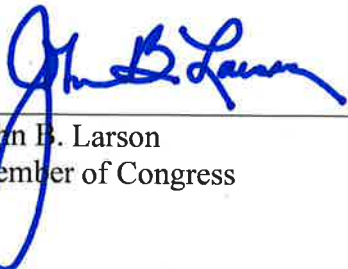
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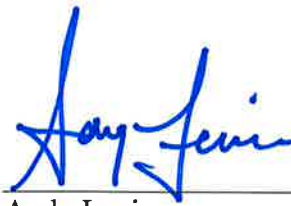
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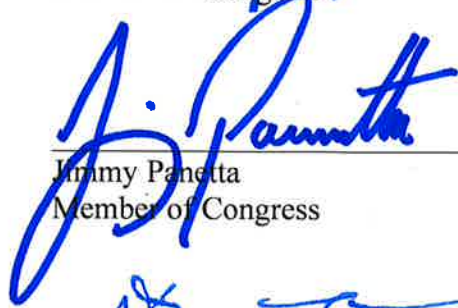
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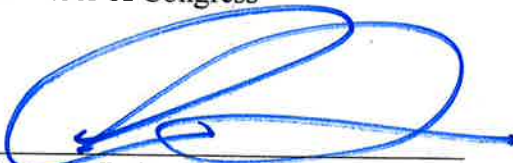
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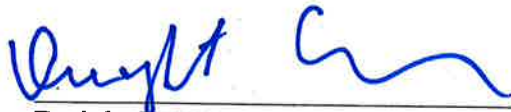
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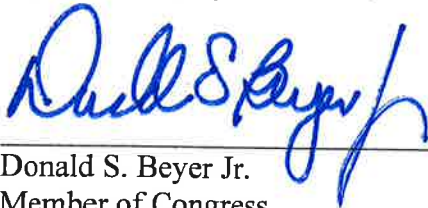
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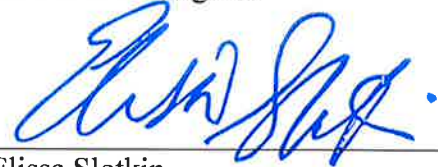
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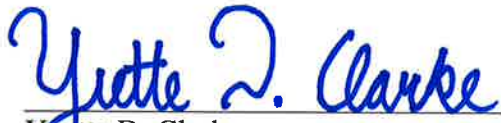
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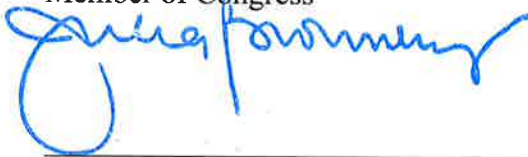
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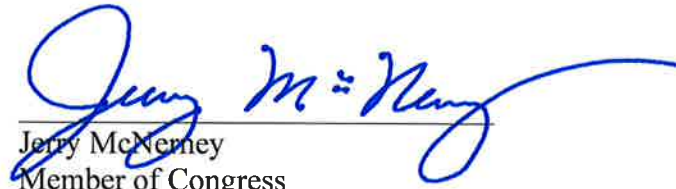
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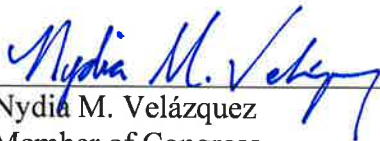
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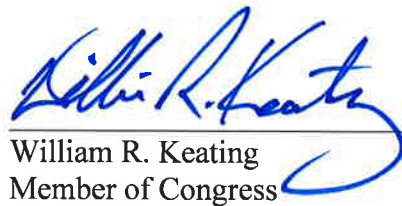
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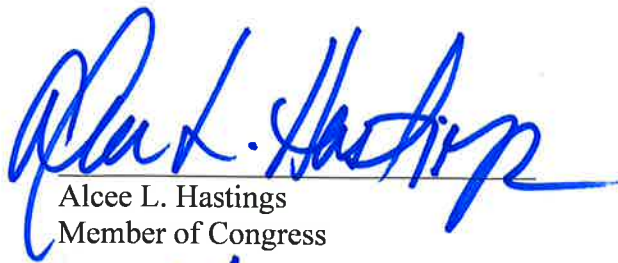


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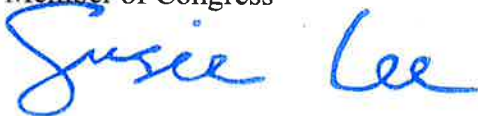
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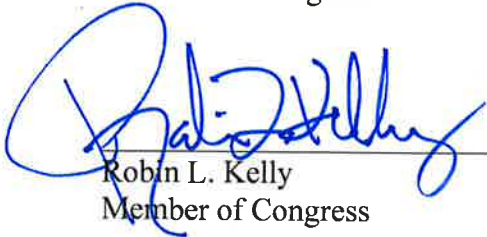
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