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SACRAMENTO, CA WASHINGTON, D.C.

WORKFORCE AND EDUCATION TEAM

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ADVANCING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

Requested Actions:

- **Reauthorization of Key Acts:** Reauthorizing and expanding acts such as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the National Apprenticeship Act (NAA), the Preparing and Resourcing Our Student Parents and Early Childhood Teachers Act (PROSPECT), the Infrastructure and Jobs Act, and the CHIPS and Science Act will ensure continued support for innovative training and education programs and are essential for sustaining momentum in workforce development and apprenticeships.
- **Legislation for Comprehensive Education to Career Pathways:** New legislation is needed to enhance the success of every student from cradle to career. This includes increased funding for creative arts and STEM education, vocational training, and programs that address the unique needs of diverse student populations.
- **Promotion of Innovative Partnerships:** Encouraging collaborations between educational institutions, industry, and government, including the role of intermediaries, can lead to the development of a robust workforce pipeline. These partnerships are vital for creating opportunities for applied learning, internships, and apprenticeships that align with the needs of key industries.
- **Strengthen Investments in Students and Families:** We should increase Perkins Grant funds for vocational and technical education, expand childcare funding for working families, and raise the income threshold for Head Start to be able to serve more children. We should boost Title I and IDEA Special Education grants for equitable K-12 education, increase Pell Grant maximums and improve Federal Student Aid, making higher education more affordable. Offering better payment options for student borrowers and reforming loan forgiveness will reduce financial strain on graduates.

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Specific Recommendations

- **Foster Industry-Education Partnerships:** Legislation should boost Department of Labor apprenticeship programs and incentivize partnerships between industries and educational institutions for curriculum relevance and practical student experience. This is crucial for preparing a workforce for future demands. Additionally, encourage or mandate higher education and workforce development to collaborate and share performance metrics.
- **Support and Pass Legislation for CTE and Workforce Development:** Members of Congress are urged to pass bills that create and enhance pathways for educator workforce development like the Educators for America Act. This includes increasing investment in professional development for educators, especially in high-demand areas such as creative arts, STEM, healthcare, and technology. They should enact and reauthorize legislation that directly supports the development of CTE pathways, making it easier for students and adult learners to access and benefit from these opportunities. They should address the critical need for CTE teacher recruitment in elementary, middle, and high schools, and advocate for clear pathways and affordability in CTE. This includes enhancing support for Pell Grants and recognizing credits for prior learning towards CTE teaching credentials, to meet the demand for skilled professionals in key industries.
- **Emphasize Adult Learners and Dual Enrollment:** Our representatives should support legislation that strengthens the pipeline from community colleges to the workforce for adult learners and dual enrollment students, including focused measures to improve data sharing. This involves making it easier for these pathways to be developed through the Department of Labor and workforce development rather than exclusively through educational systems.
- **Support the Bipartisan Workforce Pell Act:** This Act expands Pell Grants for short-term education and training programs of between 150 and 600 clock hours of instruction (or an equivalent number of credit hours), offered during period of 8 to 15 weeks.
- **Foster Educator Workforce Development Pipeline:** Adopt comprehensive policies to enhance the recruitment, retention, and incentivization of the educator workforce. This unified recommendation encompasses amending credentialing policies and facilitating interstate reciprocity, offering housing support such as the Mortgage Credit Certificate for educators, and integrating credentialing opportunities into undergraduate education. Furthermore, it includes streamlining talent acquisition through no-cost promotional efforts by media for Local Education Agencies, and incentivizing educator roles with competitive pay and benefits to address teacher shortages and prepare educators for diverse community needs.

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- **Support A Stronger Workforce for America Act:** This act aims to enhance and forge connections between employers, the workforce, and the training system. It proposes updates to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to facilitate career access and advancement for adults and dislocated workers through upskilling. The act simplifies the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), enhances support for individuals transitioning to employment after incarceration, and provides increased backing for community college workforce education programs.
- **Comprehensive Support Services:** Advocate for legislation that ensures comprehensive support services for students, addressing mental and behavioral health, special education, and the needs of underrepresented groups, including DACA learners. This includes increased funding for community schools, guidance counselors, and wrap-around services integrating Title I and IDEA. Support the Fiscal Year FY 2024 appropriations bill, enabling the U.S. Departments of Labor, Health to fund Full-Service Community Schools Program (Title IV Part F of the Every Student Succeeds Act) at \$150 million, as already passed by the Senate to meet the nationwide demand to develop community schools that equitably reinvigorate education and economic efforts in local communities. Emphasize the importance of investing in educational infrastructure, technology, and resources to foster high-quality learning environments and digital literacy. Promote equity and access by supporting universal and targeted legislation to close the achievement gap and prepare all students, especially from underserved communities, for success.

Business Nexus

Home to over 2.5 million residents, California's Capital Region is vibrant, multifaceted, and stands on the brink of significant growth across essential sectors such as health care, agriculture, and technology. Leveraging its strategic location and solid economic base, the region is dedicated to improving educational outcomes and enhancing workforce preparedness. We ask Congress to partner with key California statewide and regional initiatives, California Jobs First and K16 Educational Collaboratives, to invest in effective talent pipeline development strategies to help our region expand quality job opportunities to meet the needs of our vibrant employer base.

Background

It's critical the 118th Congress establish a comprehensive framework for educator workforce development in California's Capital Region. Policy interventions that will construct a robust educator-workforce development pipeline are a critical element in securing America's position as a global leader, boosting our national competitiveness, and equipping our workforce to navigate present and imminent challenges. The region's rich diversity and economic strengths make it an ideal candidate to spearhead advancements in education and workforce development.

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In collaboration with TK-12 public education systems, community partners, and higher education institutions, the region is committed to forging a comprehensive pathway from early education to career readiness. This initiative aims to not only foster academic excellence among students but also ensure they are well-prepared for meaningful employment opportunities, thereby enabling them to make substantial contributions to their communities and the nation as a whole.