

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATIONS SEND LETTER TO OBAMA ENCOURAGING INCREASE FUNDING FOR PERKINS

Businesses, student organizations, education organizations endorse letter

ALEXANDRIA, VA – In light of the current economic crisis and workforce issues facing America today, the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE), National Association of State Directors of Career and Technical Education Consortium (NASDCTEc) and American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) sent a joint letter to President Obama requesting that his Fiscal Year 2010 Budget include at least \$1.4 billion to support secondary and postsecondary career and technical education (CTE) programs through the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins).

ACTE, NASDCTEc and AACC reached out to education and training associations, employers and students across the country to join in united support of a Perkins funding increase. Forty-five additional organizations have also signed the letter to President Obama, which is included below. These organizations believe CTE is a critical investment in the American workforce and that further investments will enable CTE programs to produce more skilled workers to fill the jobs crucial to America's economy. With one-third of the country's fastest-growing jobs requiring an associate's degree, certificate or work-related training, CTE is a critical component in meeting the needs of both employers and the economy as a whole.

Since FY 2002, Perkins funding has decreased by \$42 million, while enrollment for CTE has increased by 6 million since 1999. There were approximately 15.6 million students taking CTE during the 2006-07 school year, which is the latest statistic available.

As the media writes articles regarding the economy, education and the appropriations and budget process, please consider this letter in your coverage. ACTE, NASDCTEc and AACC are planning to send the letter to Members of Congress, encouraging them to increase Perkins funding during the FY 2010 appropriations process.

For more information on this joint letter, please contact:

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April 3, 2009

**The Honorable Barack Obama
The White House
Washington, DC 20500**

Dear Mr. President:

The undersigned organizations, representing education and training, employer groups, and students, believe that career technical education (CTE) is a critical investment in the American workforce. We respectfully request that your FY 2010 Budget include at least \$1.4 billion to support secondary and postsecondary career technical education through the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins CTE Act).

In your recent address to Congress and in your budget outline you stressed several goals for our country, including the importance of economic growth, reducing the number of high school dropouts, encouraging Americans to go to college, and highlighting the importance of "vocational training" and career pathways programs. A strong federal investment in the Perkins CTE Act will help make these goals a reality. Since Fiscal Year 2002, the federal investment in the Perkins CTE Act has decreased by \$42 million, while enrollment levels have soared to a record high. To realize the full potential CTE can have in our nation's economic recovery, a renewed commitment in funding this program is necessary.

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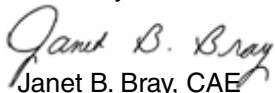
During this turbulent economic time, it is crucial to note that high-quality CTE programs can provide the education and training necessary to stimulate the economy and provide the solid education that is needed to prepare youth and displaced workers with the skills they need to succeed in today's highly technical environment. Please consider the following:

- Students who earn a CTE-related associate's degree or certificate can make an average of \$9,000 more a year than an average individual with a humanities- or social sciences-focused associate's degree – and those with credentials in high-demand fields such as healthcare can average almost \$20,000 more a year. (Jacobson et al, "Pathways to Boosting the Earnings of Low-Income Students by Increasing Their Educational Attainment," Gates Foundation/Hudson Institute, 2009.)
- A ratio of one CTE class for every two academic classes minimizes the risk of students dropping out of high school. (Plank et al, "Dropping Out of High School and the Place of Career and Technical Education," National Research Center for CTE, 2005.)
- CTE students are significantly more likely than their non-CTE counterparts to report that they developed problem-solving, project completion, research, math, college application, work-related, communication, time management and critical thinking skills during high school. (Lekes et al, "Career and Technical Education Pathway Programs, Academic Performance, and the Transition to College and Career," National Research Center for CTE, 2007.)

The Perkins CTE Act continues to evolve to ensure that workers are well prepared to hold jobs in high-wage, high-skill, high-demand career fields. These include STEM disciplines, nursing, early childhood education, allied health, construction, information technology, energy sustainability and other green jobs, and many other areas that are vital in keeping our nation competitive in the global economy. Even more valuable in our rapidly changing economy, the Perkins CTE Act is doing more than training people for specific jobs, it is giving them transferable skills that will lead to sustained career development.

An increase in funding would enable CTE programs to produce more skilled workers to fill the jobs that are crucial to America's economy. Thank you for your past and continued support and we look forward to working with your administration in the upcoming budget cycle.

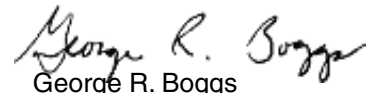
Sincerely,



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