



April 20, 2023

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chair
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Murray, Vice Chair Collins, Chair Granger, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations who make up the Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce (CIAW), we write to thank you for your leadership as part of the new 118th Congress. CIAW is a diverse coalition of national organizations that offer direct services, advocacy, research, and policy development to help people of all ages and backgrounds attain in-demand skills, succeed in postsecondary education and training, and enter family sustaining employment. We write urging you to provide robust investments in workforce and education programs as part of the forthcoming federal fiscal year 2024 (FY24) budget and appropriations process to meet the significant needs of workers, learners, and employers across the nation.

As projects from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill (BIL), Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), and the CHIPS and Science Act commence and as technological transformations continue to change the nature of work, the need for skilled workers will only increase in the years ahead. Across the country we see the need for additional federal investment in workforce education and training. For example, [75% of U.S. businesses report a skilled talent shortage](#), while the Brookings Institution estimates that at least [17 million new workers](#) will be needed to fill jobs created by these investments over the next decade. At the same time, the current ratio of unemployed workers to job openings is 0.6, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS). This means that there are nearly two available jobs for every unemployed person.

With recent layoffs across multiple industries, bank failures, rising interest rates, and emerging economic uncertainty, it is prudent to invest in our nation's workforce system to hedge against potential worker displacements and respond to these longstanding workforce needs. Volatility and uncertainty within the economy often disproportionately impact our nation's most vulnerable populations – women, people of color, individuals with disabilities, individuals without high school diplomas, returning citizens, immigrants, senior citizens, justice involved

individuals, and youth – populations that can be further engaged with the workforce to help mitigate many of these challenges and long-term talent shortages in critical sectors of the economy.

Congress must ensure workforce development programs that serve youth and adults authorized under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), including Wagner-Peyser and Adult Education, the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, and workforce adjacent programs that prepare all individuals for sustainable and high-quality employment regardless of background or wider circumstance, are provided with the necessary resources to effectively address these current realities. Now is the time to expand workforce development investments that generate a robust pipeline of skilled workers to bolster our nation's economic competitiveness while improving the lives of more Americans.

We therefore strongly urge you to increase FY24 workforce development and education investments that are vital for a resilient U.S. economy. The Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce thanks you for your leadership and commitment to a strong American workforce and would welcome the opportunity to discuss the needs of our communities with you further.

Sincerely,

Undersigned Organizations

CC: Senator Tammy Baldwin, Senator Shelley Moore Capito, Representative Robert Aderholt