

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 743

Expressing support for the designation of September 2023 as “National Workforce Development Month”.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 29, 2023

Ms. BONAMICI (for herself and Mr. GUTHRIE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

RESOLUTION

Expressing support for the designation of September 2023 as “National Workforce Development Month”.

Whereas support for the education, development, and career advancement of the workforce in the United States, known as “workforce development”, is crucial to the ability of the United States to compete in the global economy;

Whereas collaboration among Governors, local governments, State and local education, workforce and human services agencies, community colleges, local businesses, employment service providers, community-based organizations, and workforce development boards provides for long-term, sustainable, and successful workforce development across traditional sectors and emerging industries;

Whereas the number of jobs that require more than a high school diploma but not a 4-year degree is projected to increase by roughly 23 percent by 2030;

Whereas 76 percent of business leaders say greater support for skills development would help their businesses;

Whereas, in 2021, a record 47,400,000 Americans quit their jobs, many of whom did so to try to improve their employment situation;

Whereas, as of August 2023 in the United States—

(1) roughly 6,300,000 individuals are unemployed;

(2) unemployment rates for Black and Hispanic adults are well above the unemployment rates for White adults;

(3) workers without postsecondary education and skills development are more likely to be unemployed; and

(4) more than half of the jobs lost due to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID–19) pandemic were by workers earning less than \$40,000 per year;

Whereas, according to a recent poll 44 percent of United States workers said their current job may be at risk due to new developments in technology and automation, while 50 percent said they would retrain for a career in a different field or industry if they had the opportunity;

Whereas, in 2014, Congress reauthorized the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.) with overwhelming bipartisan support in recognition of the need to strengthen the focus of the United States on the skills necessary to effectively prepare individuals for employment in local and regional industries;

Whereas the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.) supports employment, skills develop-

ment, and support services for individuals with barriers to employment, including—

- (1) individuals who earn low incomes;
- (2) individuals who are out of work, including the long-term unemployed;
- (3) individuals displaced by outsourcing;
- (4) individuals living in rural areas or areas with persistently high unemployment;
- (5) individuals looking to learn new skills; and
- (6) individuals with disabilities;

Whereas the more than 550 workforce development boards and 2,400 American Job Centers are a driving force behind growing regional economies by providing resources and assistance to workers who aim to compete in the 21st century economy;

Whereas ongoing State and local implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.) provides unprecedented opportunities to develop the skills of workers in the United States through access to effective, quality workforce education, including the development and delivery of proven strategies such as sector partnerships, career pathways, integrated education, work-based learning models, and paid internships;

Whereas, in 2022, programs authorized under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.) are estimated to have served more than 5,000,000 and have the potential to serve many more if the delivery of such programs is improved;

Whereas State programs established under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.)—

- (1) ensured that nearly 2,500,000 workers, including more than 146,000 veterans and more than 120,000 indi-

viduals with disabilities, had access to career services virtually and through American Job Centers during the 2020 program year; and

(2) are a foundational part of the workforce development system;

Whereas community colleges and other workforce development providers across the United States are well situated—

(1) to train the next generation of workers in the United States; and

(2) to address the educational challenges created by emerging industries and technological advancements;

Whereas participation in a career and technical education (referred to in this preamble as “CTE”) program decreases the risk of students dropping out of high school, and all 50 States and the District of Columbia report higher graduation rates for CTE students, as compared to other students;

Whereas community and technical colleges operate as open access institutions serving millions of students annually at a comparatively low cost;

Whereas the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Public Law 115–224; 132 Stat. 1563) supports the development and implementation of high-quality CTE programs that—

(1) combine rigorous academic content with occupational skills; and

(2) serve approximately 12,300,000 high school and college students across the country;

Whereas there are nearly 600,000 registered apprentices in the United States, and there is growing and bipartisan

support for expanding quality earn-and-learn strategies to help current and future workers gain skills and work experience;

Whereas the federally supported workforce system and partner programs—

(1) have helped rebuild the economy of the United States and provide increased economic opportunities;

(2) provide a pathway into 21st century jobs that support families while ensuring that businesses in the United States find the skilled workforce needed to compete in the global economy; and

(3) have the potential to serve many more if the delivery of such programs is improved; and

Whereas workforce development is crucial to sustaining economic security for workers in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) expresses support for the designation of
3 “National Workforce Development Month”;

4 (2) supports Federal initiatives to promote
5 workforce development; and

6 (3) acknowledges that workforce development
7 plays a crucial role in supporting workers and grow-
8 ing the economy.

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