



July 7, 2016

Dear Chairman Kline, Ranking Member Scott and Representatives Jeffries and Stefanik:

We, the undersigned businesses and organizations, support the bipartisan H.R. 5587, *The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act*, sponsored by Representatives G.T. Thompson and Katherine Clark. We urge you to move swiftly toward passage of this important legislation.

The skills gap in New York continues to grow, with the deficit for mid-level skills job estimated at 350,000 by 2020¹. Modernizing career and technical education (CTE) programs, designed with the input of employers and responsive to the needs identified by labor market data, is vital to helping fill open positions and ensuring the nation's economic competitiveness.

Language in the legislation currently before the House Committee on Education and the Workforce would ensure that increased funding is directed *only* at those programs that include strong business partnerships and align to industry need. This would include NYS P-TECH partnerships—innovative grade 9-14 career schools focused on a two-year college degree in addition to a high school diploma and mastery of professional skills— which receive tremendous support from The Business Council and its members. Each NYS P-TECH school is a local partnership among school districts, private sector companies and a community college.

Specifically, the legislation would enhance aspects of the Perkins CTE Act by:

- Aligning CTE programs to the needs of the regional, state, and local labor market;
- Supporting effective and meaningful collaboration between secondary and postsecondary institutions and employers;
- Increasing student participation in work-based learning opportunities; and
- Promoting the use of industry recognized credentials and other recognized post-secondary credentials.

These improvements would help New York students acquire the skills that they need to be successful in college and the workforce, and ensure that New York employers have a trained, readied workforce. We urge you to move forward with H.R. 5587 and applaud

¹ <http://readynation.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/RN-NY-Skills-Brief.pdf>

the ongoing, bipartisan commitment to invest in our nation's students, workers, and economy through the Perkins CTE program.

Sincerely,

The Business Council of New York State
Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce
Chemung County Chamber of Commerce
MACNY, The Manufacturers Association
The Manufacturers Alliance of New York
SUNY Geneseo
Fulton Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce
Hillside Family of Agencies
Monroe Community College
New York State School Boards Association
Berkeley College