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Opening Statement of Rep. John Kline
Chairman, Committee on Education and the Workforce
Field Hearing on "Reviving our Economy: How Career and Technical Education Can Strengthen the Workforce"

Our economy faces many challenges. Millions remain out of work, and the labor participation rate has declined to thirty-year lows. Here in the Silver State, families struggle with 8.8 percent unemployment - one of the highest unemployment rates in the country. Unemployment among young people ages 16 to 19 is even higher, at 29 percent.

We need to do more to help these families rebuild and recover from the lingering effects of the recession. One of the House Education and the Workforce Committee's priorities for the 113th Congress has been strengthening the nation's network of job training services. Last year, the House approved the *Supporting Knowledge and Investing in Lifelong Skills Act*, legislation to revamp the federal workforce development system and help more workers learn in-demand skills.

The committee is now examining career and technical education, or CTE, in preparation for the upcoming reauthorization of the *Perkins Act*. As you may know, the *Perkins Act* provides federal funding to states to support CTE programs that allow high school and community college students to access valuable training programs and hands-on experience necessary to gain an edge in the local workforce.

There are a number of great CTE schools in Nevada, and we're fortunate to be holding today's field hearing at one of the best. The Southwest Career and Technical Academy is renowned for its rigorous coursework and hands-on training in a number of fields, including nursing, culinary arts, automotive technology, and web design, just to name a few.

I believe my colleagues and I have the opportunity after the hearing to take a tour of the school, and I look forward to meeting with students, visiting the classrooms, and seeing firsthand the quality training available here at the academy.

As the committee works to strengthen career and technical education, it's important we hear from students, educators, and state and local leaders in the business and education communities about the challenges and opportunities facing CTE programs. Your feedback helps inform and strengthen our work in Washington, and we are grateful for your participation and your input.

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