

H.R. 496, PROMOTING EMPLOYMENT AND LIFELONG LEARNING (PELL) ACT

Reps. Stefanik, Foxx, Banks, Hinson, and "GT" Thompson

THE PROBLEM:

- The college-for-all mentality is failing American workers.
 - Rising costs and diminishing quality of many degree programs have left students and taxpayers financing thousands of credentials that provide little to no return on investment.
- Employers across all industries are struggling to find qualified workers, and job creators are finding that a college degree can be a flawed predictor of an employee's preparedness.
- Job creators are reconsidering how they assess applicants' abilities and knowledge.
 - In the tech industry over 70 percent of employers say they will hire based on skills requirements, not education level.
- While skills-based hiring has been on the rise in the private sector, there are more than 10 million unfilled jobs across the country and nearly six million unemployed individuals.

THE SOLUTION:

- The Pell Grant is a transformative tool, providing access to postsecondary education for millions of Americans who would otherwise be unable to afford it.
- Americans are seeking flexible, short-term credential options that lead to career advancement, and taxpayer dollars need to be more effective in aligning education opportunities with workforce needs.
- The *Promoting Employment and Lifelong Learning (PELL) Act* does just that by expanding Pell Grant eligibility to high-quality, short-term programs that provide students and taxpayers a return on their investment.



H.R. 496, THE PELL ACT:

- Helps students participate in short-term programs to move into a job quickly.
 - Extends the Pell Grant to programs of at least 150 clock hours, or an equivalent, offered during a minimum of eight weeks.
- Creates a sensible quality assurance system for Workforce Pell Grant programs—allowing any type of education provider to participate as long as they meet all the requirements.
 - Avoids a complex system of red tape and instead provides clear requirements for programs focused on delivering skills education.
 - Requires all programs to provide education aligned with requirements of in-demand industries, meet the hiring requirements of employers, be in operation for more than one year, have at least a 70 percent completion and job placement rate, and be evaluated by an accreditor with the expertise to ensure that students will be qualified for employment.
- Ensures that program prices are aligned with economic value such that students and taxpayers receive a positive return on investment within three years or less.
 - Prohibits any programs from participating in the Workforce Pell Grant program if they cannot meet this accountability guardrail within three years.
- Promotes early awareness and transparency about Workforce Pell Grants by requiring the Department of Education to publish data on program costs and outcomes on the College Scorecard.

