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April 5, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson and Minority Leader Jeffries,

On behalf of the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) – representing over 27,000 construction firms in every state – **I urge you and your colleagues to vote “YES” on H.R. 6655, A Stronger Workforce for America Act** to reauthorize and reform the nation’s public workforce system. H.R. 6655 will improve the workforce development system by increasing opportunities for skills development and strengthen connections between employers and the workforce system.

H.R. 6655 builds upon reforms contained in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which was enacted a decade ago. Despite the progress since WIOA was enacted, there continues to be a need for improvements to address the continuing workforce shortage in the construction industry.

The reforms AGC supports in H.R. 6655 include a mandate that half of the funds be spent on skills development, rather than administrative or other costs. New grant programs and flexibility options will allow high performing states and local areas to experiment and develop better tools and tactics to address specific local needs. Finally, employers could see training costs reimbursed and employees that are preparing to work in a state’s fastest growing sectors will be eligible for additional funds in their individual training accounts.

The bill includes other reforms that adds accountability metrics to programs by considering verified employment outcomes and implementing tougher standards on training providers and participating employers. Together, the funding and administrative changes will improve the federal workforce system and ensure basic skills training better matches the needs and demands of the construction industry.

Again, AGC urges you to support H.R. 6655. AGC also looks forward to working with Congress on additional ways to improve the nation’s workforce system and address the skilled worker shortages.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'James V. Christianson'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

James V. Christianson
Chief Operating Officer