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**U.S. House of Representatives**

**Committee on Education and Workforce**

**Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Development**

**Workforce Rewired: Modern Apprenticeships for a Modern Economy**

**June 24, 2026**

Good morning, Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the future of Registered Apprenticeship in the United States.

My name is John Ladd, and I serve as Senior Advisor at Jobs for the Future's Center for Apprenticeship & Work-Based Learning. Before joining JFF in 2025, I served as Administrator of the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship across four administrations, both Republican and Democratic. Over that period, I saw apprenticeship evolve from a niche training approach associated primarily with the skilled trades into one of the nation's leading workforce strategies. That experience has only deepened my view that apprenticeship has enormous promise, but that the country will not achieve the scale it now seeks without a more modern, better aligned, and more durable national framework to meet those goals.

JFF is a national, nonpartisan organization that works to transform workforce and education systems so that more people can access economic advancement and quality jobs. Through the center, JFF serves as a national apprenticeship policy, research, field-building, and technical assistance partner, helping employers, industry associations, states, workforce boards, education institutions, labor-management partnerships, related technical instruction providers, and community-based organizations design, launch, expand, and improve apprenticeship systems and programs. Next year will mark the center's 10-year anniversary, representing a decade of focused leadership to expand and modernize apprenticeship across the United States.

JFF believes strongly in the power and future of Registered Apprenticeship and work-based learning broadly. Since the establishment of the center, JFF has helped develop or expand apprenticeship efforts in 40 states, engaged more than 3,300 employers and sponsors, created more than 155 programs and more than 300 resources, and supported more than 14,000 apprentices, including more than 1,760 young people entering Registered Apprenticeship programs including 37% of apprentices from populations that are statistically underrepresented in apprenticeship, including women, youth, veterans, and people with disabilities. This breadth of work matters because it means JFF sees apprenticeship from multiple vantage points at once: as a policy and funding priority, as an employer talent strategy, as a youth pathway, as a postsecondary pathway, as a unique public-private partnership, and as a workforce development system that requires durable infrastructure.

Our body of apprenticeship work includes serving as the U.S. Department of Labor's manufacturing industry intermediary, helping expand Registered Apprenticeship across advanced manufacturing and agriculture by supporting more than 5,600 apprentices across 35 states and Puerto Rico, launching more than 40 new Registered Apprenticeship programs, engaging hundreds of employers, and providing roughly \$2.25 million in employer incentives to offset training costs. It includes serving as the U.S. Department of Labor's Youth Apprenticeship

Intermediary, through which JFF established 47 new local apprenticeship programs, added 47 youth elements to a national program, supported 1,763 youth apprentices, and helped launch Oregon's first registered youth apprenticeship program. It includes JFF's Apprenticeship Expansion and Modernization Fund and Apprenticeship Building America work, through which JFF has expanded access to apprenticeship for youth by enrolling 701 young people who are not working or in school into Registered Apprenticeship through AEMF and, through ABA, enrolling 122 apprentices and 935 pre-apprentices while supporting 696 pre-apprentice completions and creating and expanding new apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship pathways. It also includes JFF's broader field-building work on youth pathways, expanding access in apprenticeship, and postsecondary-connected apprenticeship models, including degree apprenticeship approaches that connect paid work, college credit, and advancement. JFF has consistently delivered results on promoting innovation and expanding apprenticeship and we look forward to working with DOL to continue these efforts.

Apprenticeship is no longer a niche strategy—it is one of the clearest ways to connect education, work, and economic mobility at a moment when the limits of a college-for-all approach are increasingly clear, and the age of AI is making skill-building, adaptability, and real-world experience even more important. It delivers value for workers, employers, and the public alike. And in this 250th anniversary year, Congress has a chance to strengthen a model for the future that reaches back to the founding itself: apprenticeship helped shape early American opportunity, including for several Founding Fathers who began their working lives as apprentices.

If Congress wants apprenticeship to reach its full potential, it must modernize the framework, strengthen the pathway, and invest in the durable infrastructure needed for national growth. My testimony makes five core points and asks Congress to act on them:

- 1) Apprenticeship is a proven bipartisan strategy that delivers value for workers, employers, and the public.
- 2) The United States has made real progress, but current growth has slowed and the country is not on pace to reach one million active apprentices without deliberate intervention.
- 3) Scaling apprenticeship will require clearer roles across the national ecosystem, including for the federal government, states, industry, intermediaries, and education partners.
- 4) Apprenticeship should be built as a connected pathway system linking pre-apprenticeship, youth apprenticeship, Registered Apprenticeship, and degree apprenticeship, with no dead ends for learners and workers.

- 5) Congress should reauthorize the National Apprenticeship Act and pair that modernization with sustained investment, stronger employer incentives, better data, and a long-term national growth and innovation strategy.

### **Apprenticeship is a proven bipartisan workforce strategy, but the conditions for scaling are not yet in place**

Registered Apprenticeship has earned broad support because it has demonstrated powerful results for workers, employers, and the public. For workers, it offers a paid route to skill development, a portable credential, wage progression, and access to a career without requiring people to take on substantial debt. Completers of an apprenticeship program earn, on average, approximately \$80,000 per year and have a lifetime earnings advantage of close to \$300,000. For employers, it creates reliable talent pipelines, improves retention, and helps ensure that training is directly tied to business need. Employers see a [return](#) of \$1.44 for every \$1 invested. For the public, it is one of the clearest examples of an investment tied directly to employment and economic advancement. [Research](#) by Mathematica for DOL found an estimated public return of \$28 for every \$1 invested in apprenticeships due to higher wages and lower social costs; this doesn't even factor in the extent to which apprenticeship leverages private investment and produces labor-market value. This basic value proposition helps explain why apprenticeship has retained bipartisan support across administrations and in Congress.

Fueled by renewed interest and federal investment, the growth of the apprenticeship system over the past decade has been remarkable. Registered Apprenticeship now produces more than 300,000 new apprentices annually and has become the largest training delivery system overseen by the Employment and Training Administration, serving more people each year than WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth training combined. The number of active apprentices has essentially doubled from roughly 350,000 in 2014 to 700,000 today. Supported by federal investments, the growth of national programs, sustained expansion in most states, and adoption across industries, the system has grown meaningfully over the last decade, including increasing the number of women, youth, veterans, people with disabilities, and populations facing barriers to economic advancement having access to Registered Apprenticeship opportunities.

That is the good news. The harder truth is that the growth rate has slowed recently. [JFF's recent analysis](#) concluded that the growth of active apprentice counts has plateaued and has even slightly declined, such that, on the current trajectory, the country will fall short of one million active apprentices by the end of the decade without deliberate intervention. In addition, by international comparisons, the United States still does not approach the level of labor-market penetration achieved by other countries that have built apprenticeship into the core of their

workforce and education systems. While investment in apprenticeship has also plateaued over the past few years, additional factors are at play for these recent trends.

Most importantly, in my opinion, despite general agreement on the benefits and effectiveness of apprenticeship, funding and policy priorities for apprenticeship have changed significantly over the past decade. General support has not led to a consistent strategy and focus over the past decade, but rather to cycles of progress and disruption, which has hurt our ability to scale and invest in strategies that work.

In addition, while there has been strong national growth, it has been uneven. The number of apprentices in national programs has tripled since 2016. Many states have significantly outperformed the national average, but others still have roughly the same number of apprentices as a decade ago, or even fewer. Another cohort of states is growing but growing significantly more slowly than the national average.

The sector story is similarly mixed. At the national level, based on DOL's data, the number of active apprentices outside construction is now higher than in construction, a notable sign of expansion into non-traditional sectors. The country has also seen visible successes in newer occupations and sectors, including teacher apprenticeships. While starting from a relatively low base, there has been significant growth in "nontraditional" industries over the last five years, most notably in the financial services, agriculture, energy, and technology sectors, where apprentice participation has grown by 359%, 56%, 43%, and 29%, respectively. But adoption and penetration across the economy still lag where they need to be in order to drive wide-scale growth, especially in advanced manufacturing and other sectors where employer demand for talent is high but incentives to utilize apprenticeship are lacking.

Finally, completion remains one of the most underappreciated drivers of scale. Too many apprentices fail to complete due to lack of preparation for the career, inadequate supportive services, weak mentoring systems, and other reasons. JFF's analysis found that the system processes roughly 150,000 to 160,000 cancellations annually, compared with approximately 120,000 completions as of FY25. National completion rates remain below 50% even without counting those who cancel within the first year. Modest improvements in retention would therefore boost overall apprenticeship numbers significantly. [Analysis by Social Finance](#) suggests that a 10-percentage-point improvement in completion rates alone could add tens of thousands of active apprentices nationally. And this matters not only for the size of the system. Completers realize stronger long-term returns, including higher lifetime wage gains than non-completers.

## Three critical steps to advancing apprenticeship at national scale: who, what, and how

Based on my experience, there is no single or overnight solution to modernizing or achieving scale in apprenticeship. This work takes comprehensive solutions that we commit to over time. JFF has published a “Policy Blueprint to Expand and Modernize Apprenticeship Nationwide” that outlines many important recommendations that are critical to scaling apprenticeship. I encourage everyone to read the report, but to summarize, I believe there are three critical steps to advancing apprenticeship on a national scale.

- The first is being clear about **who** makes up the national apprenticeship system: to improve navigability, particularly for employers, the country must identify the key stakeholders in the national apprenticeship system and, as importantly, clarify their roles in the broader ecosystem.
- The second is providing clarity on the **what**: to better support workers, students, and career seekers, the country must identify the core program models in apprenticeship and work-based learning and explain how they fit together in a coherent pathway with no dead ends.
- The third is **how**: to rally support, marshal needed investments, and achieve scale, the country must develop a national growth and innovation strategy intentionally designed to be long-term, bipartisan, and durable across administrations.

Those three questions, who, what, and how, provide a useful frame for the reforms needed now.

### Who: the current system needs clearer roles and a more coherent ecosystem

One of the clearest indicators of success from the last decade is that apprenticeship is no longer a small, closed system known to only a handful of players. It is now an expanding ecosystem involving employers, industry associations, labor-management partnerships, state apprenticeship agencies, federal agencies, community colleges, four-year institutions, workforce boards, community-based organizations, intermediaries, related technical instruction providers, pre-apprenticeship providers, philanthropic actors, data and technology vendors, and others. That growth in actors has created the conditions for scaling, but it has also sometimes created confusion.

Employers, especially those new to apprenticeship, often find it difficult to navigate the system or find the right partners. Their experience can also vary widely from state to state. New sponsors may not know who is responsible for helping them design standards, who can deliver related instruction, who can help recruit apprentices, what supports are available, or how public

funds can be used. A modern system requires greater role clarity so that the various parts of the ecosystem complement one another rather than operate in parallel or at cross purposes.

At a minimum, we should explicitly articulate roles for the following key players across the apprenticeship eco-system:

- **Federal Role.** The federal government has an indispensable role in that architecture. It should set the national vision and broad policy direction, provide funding that supports the broader ecosystem, maintain quality assurance and registration standards, modernize data infrastructure, support technical assistance, coordinate workforce, education, and economic development policy, and help create greater consistency across states while preserving room for state leadership and innovation. The federal government also plays a critical role in registering programs that operate on a national scale.
- **State Role.** State leadership and responsibility for apprenticeship is also critical. States should lead strategic workforce planning, align apprenticeship with economic development, workforce, and education priorities, coordinate across state agencies, support statewide career pathways, and expand State Apprenticeship Agency capacity to meet industry demand.
- **Industry.** Employers and industry leaders, including labor, remain the essential actors in the system. Apprenticeship is employer-driven by design. Employers define occupational competencies, sponsor or participate in programs, and provide the paid work experience that distinguishes apprenticeship from other training strategies. Industry associations and labor-management partnerships can translate that employer role into sectoral scale by organizing standards, recruiting peers, and supporting multi-employer designs.
- **Intermediaries.** Intermediaries have become increasingly important over the past decade. Intermediaries such as industry associations, chambers of commerce, nonprofit organizations, community organizations, community colleges, labor-management partnerships, workforce boards, and other trusted local or industry organizations can reduce employer burden, provide technical assistance, recruit and support apprentices, align additional partners, braid resources, and help programs grow across industries and regions. This is particularly important for small and midsize employers, which often want to participate in apprenticeship but do not have the internal capacity to manage every design, reporting, compliance, and partnership function alone.
- **Education.** Education partners, who historically have been the RTI providers for non-traditional industries, have an opportunity to play an even greater role as intermediaries and sponsors of multi-employer programs. In addition, K-12 systems, career and technical education leaders, community colleges, universities, and related technical

instruction providers should align curriculum, award credit for apprenticeship learning, build stackable credentials, and support degree apprenticeship models that create seamless learner pathways. That role becomes increasingly important as apprenticeship expands into sectors where postsecondary education and formal credentials are already embedded in hiring and advancement.

JFF's own experience underscores that point. In its manufacturing intermediary role, JFF combined national outreach, technical assistance, standards development, sponsor support, and incentive funding to help employers adopt apprenticeship in high-demand occupations. That model worked not because employers were absent from the design, but because intermediaries made employer participation feasible and scalable. As an example from JFF's earlier work, small and medium-sized John Deere dealers across multiple states joined an agricultural equipment technician apprenticeship precisely because the intermediary function reduced the burden of building and navigating the program alone.

Being clear about these various roles improves navigability and creates the conditions to scale. Neither the current National Apprenticeship Act nor its enabling regulations, last updated in 2008, makes any mention of roles beyond SAAs and sponsors, and yet these expanded roles are essential to a modern, functional apprenticeship system. While a comprehensive approach is needed, many states have taken initial steps by establishing processes to either recognize pre-apprenticeship programs or intermediaries or both. We should build on this progress and codify these and other roles as necessary partners in the apprenticeship ecosystem.

### **What: apprenticeship must be part of a connected pathway system with no dead ends**

A second major challenge is that apprenticeship is at risk for splintering along various program models rather than being seen as part of a broader pathway system anchored by Registered Apprenticeship. The nation needs a connected talent development system that links career exploration, pre-apprenticeship, youth apprenticeship, Registered Apprenticeship, degree apprenticeship, and ongoing career advancement. Apprenticeship pathways should offer no dead ends and multiple on- and off-ramps for learners and workers.

That pathway often begins earlier than apprenticeship itself. Career-connected learning, work-based learning, career advising, and employer engagement in K-12 can help young people understand opportunity earlier and build stronger connections between school and work.

High-quality pre-apprenticeship is an essential component in building these connections. Pre-apprenticeship can build foundational skills, prepare people for success, expand access for

populations facing barriers to economic advancement, and improve later apprenticeship completion and conversion. It can also support multiple successful outcomes, including direct entry into Registered Apprenticeship, postsecondary education, and employment. In practice, high-quality pre-apprenticeship is one of the clearest tools the system has for broadening access without lowering standards. Based on JFF's experience including managing a national apprenticeship fund on behalf of Google, improved access to pre-apprenticeship and other work-based learning opportunities, as well as supportive services during an apprenticeship, are critical and proven strategies to increase retention and completion in apprenticeship programs.

Youth apprenticeship should also become a mainstream pathway. JFF's experience and work on youth apprenticeship underscores our recommendation that work-based learning is not simply a workforce strategy, but a navigational strategy that helps learners understand how classroom learning connects to real careers—reducing the disconnect between school and work. These opportunities can also strengthen employer pipelines and create earlier access to paid, career-connected learning. JFF has long argued for a clear and consistent federal definition of youth apprenticeship, stronger data collection, more youth-centered design, and better alignment across K-12, postsecondary education, and workforce systems. Those issues remain unresolved, and they continue to limit scale.

The gains from getting youth apprenticeship right are substantial. JFF's earlier analysis of youth apprenticeship found that the number of young people participating in apprenticeship increased significantly over the previous decade and that youth apprentices earned strong wages relative to peers. But that same work also highlighted persistent gaps in who participates, who completes, and who realizes wage gains. That is why the design of youth pathways matters so much. Access cannot be an afterthought in youth apprenticeship; it must be part of the design from the start.

JFF's own work offers further practical examples. As the U.S. Department of Labor's Youth Apprenticeship Intermediary, JFF supported 1,763 youth apprentices, helped establish 47 new local apprenticeship programs, added 47 youth elements to a national program, and helped launch Oregon's first registered youth apprenticeship program. Through AEMF and ABA, JFF has worked to create more connected pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship pathways for in-school and out-of-school youth who have often been left out of these systems. JFF's work has also emphasized strategies such as mentorship, navigation, community-based partnerships, and supportive services because those are often decisive for whether young people persist and complete.

Degree apprenticeship represents one of the strongest opportunities for future growth because it further integrates college and apprenticeship, reduces educational debt, supports skill

attainment in professional occupations, and can expand access in fields such as health care, information technology, manufacturing, infrastructure, and other high-growth sectors. JFF itself has recently sponsored a Registered Apprenticeship program in the insurance and brokerage sector that embeds an associate degree through Western Governors University into the program's design and completion requirements, illustrating how apprenticeship and postsecondary education can reinforce rather than compete with one another.

Rather than seeing each of these program models as stand-alone interventions, they should be seen as part of a coordinated and connected career pathway system providing progressive work-based learning opportunities for career seekers. States like Colorado and Indiana are making progress in establishing qualification systems that are essential to creating these pathways. Congress should also support policies that intentionally align pre-apprenticeship, youth apprenticeship, Registered Apprenticeship, and degree apprenticeship into a connected apprenticeship career pathway system.

### **How: the nation needs a long-term apprenticeship growth and innovation strategy**

A third major challenge is that the country has not had a sufficiently stable, consensus-based, long-term national strategy for apprenticeship growth. Since at least 2016, we've set national goals and provided meaningful federal funding, and those goals and that investment has mattered. JFF applauds the administration's efforts to establish the goal of 1 million apprentices and lay out a broad national [talent strategy](#). But the system has not benefited from a decade of uninterrupted efforts and specific strategies towards these common national goals. Instead, states, intermediaries, and sponsors have had to respond to changing priorities, shifting funding strategies, and recurring disruption. Some change can spur innovation, but too much change interrupts momentum and weakens the incentive to invest in durable infrastructure.

At the same time, given its authorization in 1937, the system was originally designed for an earlier economy. It emerged largely around the needs of a narrower set of industries, yet it now must adapt to faster skill change, broader industry demand, new technologies, and a labor market that increasingly values skills-based hiring and more flexible learning pathways. However, that does not mean abandoning what makes apprenticeship valuable and effective. In fact, the value of apprenticeship stems precisely from its rigor and consistency. The challenge is finding a better balance between preserving what works and promoting forms of innovation that can support broader adoption. JFF has recently contributed to this broader policy discussion through its analysis of how the country could close the gap to one million active apprentices and through its policy blueprint to modernize and expand apprenticeship nationwide.

In JFF's view, Congress should work with the administration to engage with stakeholders and field leaders to establish a National Apprenticeship Growth and Innovation Strategy. That strategy should be intentionally designed to be consensus-based, bipartisan, and durable across administrations. One important way to do that would be to reconstitute the Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship and charge it with developing a national strategy to promote innovation and growth in apprenticeship. That committee should hold field hearings across the country and engage in a true national debate with stakeholders about the future of apprenticeship.

The strategy itself should lay out a long-term plan that includes several concrete elements.

- First, it should include a **short-term implementation plan**, including policy, funding, and communications strategies, to reach one million apprentices by 2030.
- Second, it should include a **ten-year vision and recommendations** to reach at least two million apprentices, with a moon-shot goal of four million apprentices over time. The point of naming a larger long-term horizon is to make clear that one million should be understood as a milestone, not an endpoint, and that true scaling will require sustained and consistent efforts over a longer period of time.
- Third, the Department of Labor should regularly issue a **public five-year investment plan** that provides a general overview of planned federal investment areas over the next five years. That kind of transparency would provide greater certainty to states, employers, investors, intermediaries, philanthropy, and other stakeholders. It would make it more rational for them to invest in long-term apprenticeship infrastructure.
- Fourth, the strategy should establish **State Growth and Innovation Zones**. These should leverage the competitive portion of state funding to promote growth and innovation, with a particular focus on supporting states that develop clear strategies to increase enrollment numbers, improve completion, expand into new sectors, and align apprenticeship with education, workforce, and economic development priorities.
- Fifth, the strategy should include a **Strategic Outreach and Marketing Plan**. The federal government should explore establishing a public-private entity to lead marketing and outreach efforts, with leadership from the private sector, to engage key sectors and secure commitments from major employers. Apprenticeship has too often lacked a durable national vehicle capable of mobilizing employer leadership and engagement at scale. A public-private structure could play that role more flexibly than a purely governmental entity or grant program and could engage in fundraising to support broader marketing and outreach efforts.

**Reauthorizing the National Apprenticeship Act is the clearest path to durable modernization**

There is a limit to how much can be accomplished through administrative action alone. Continued efforts to modernize apprenticeship through regulations, guidance, pilot initiatives, and discretionary investments are important, but they will not fully resolve the long-standing tensions and ambiguities within the system. Nor will they provide the level of legitimacy and durability that a national strategy of this importance deserves.

That is why Congress should reauthorize the National Apprenticeship Act.

The Act has provided the foundation for apprenticeship for decades. But today's economy requires more modern governance, updated funding structures, stronger pathway alignment, clearer system definition, and better tools for innovation and scale. A reauthorized Act should do at least the following.

- **Appropriations.** Authorize appropriations and identify core funding activities, including formula funding for States and support for system infrastructure, technical assistance, innovation, data modernization, pre-apprenticeship, youth apprenticeship, degree apprenticeship, related technical instruction, employer participation, and intermediary capacity. The establishment of national goals must be matched by resources commensurate with those goals.
- **Incentives.** While clear incentives exist for employers in the construction industry to utilize apprenticeship, we must provide meaningful employer incentives across all industries. JFF's own intermediary work has shown that well-designed incentives can help offset startup and training costs, especially for small and midsize employers and for employers in newer sectors. Employer incentives are not a substitute for the need for apprenticeships to be a smart talent investment for industry, but they are a practical tool for changing behavior and catalyzing participation. This will require significant resources, and we should not have to choose between employer incentives and system investments—scaling ultimately requires both.
- **Define the Eco-System.** As discussed earlier, identify the system more clearly, both what it is and who its stakeholders are. That means identifying the major actors in the national apprenticeship system and clarifying the roles of the federal government, states, local actors, sponsors, intermediaries, labor partners, education and training providers, related technical instruction providers, and employers.
- **Establish Governance Structure.** Codify governance structures that clarify the federal-state relationship while also including a meaningful local role through the promotion of Apprenticeship Hubs, partnerships of key local organizations capable of making the system more navigable, coordinating services and funding, and connecting employers, training providers, and community partners around shared goals. NAA reauthorization should also encourage alignment between our nation's apprenticeship

system and other related education and workforce programs (i.e., Perkins CTE and WIOA). This alignment can ensure greater coordination at the state and local level, better leveraging of federal resources for high-impact training like apprenticeship and easier data collection and understanding of participant outcomes.

- **Identify Core Program Models and Pathway System.** Also, as discussed earlier, reauthorization should identify and support core program models and pathways. That includes pre-apprenticeship, youth apprenticeship, Registered Apprenticeship, and degree apprenticeship. These models should not be left conceptually disconnected. Congress should make clear that a modern apprenticeship system includes structured on-ramps, multiple entry points, and aligned advancement routes.
- **Balance Quality and Innovation.** Reauthorization must resolve long-standing debates and tensions in the system in ways that support innovation while preserving quality. That includes addressing issues such as training approaches and ratios through a more durable policymaking process. These and other debates are real and have become the sticking points in adopting broader reforms. Ultimately, reauthorization is the appropriate place to engage them thoughtfully rather than leaving them to recurring administrative processes.
- **Performance Accountability System.** Establish modern performance measures and data collection systems. Completion rates matter, but they are not sufficient by themselves. At a minimum, a modern accountability and reporting system should include measures related to employment and retention after completion, wages after completion, and credential attainment. Better data will help policymakers understand what works, what does not, and where investment can have the greatest impact.

Additional recommendations for reauthorization can be found in JFF's [\*Policy Blueprint for Modernizing and Expanding Registered Apprenticeship Nationwide\*](#). Those priorities include modernization of delivery models, stronger employer engagement, expanded access, better postsecondary alignment, stronger navigation and support structures, and greater investment in scalable infrastructure. In short, reauthorization should not simply protect the system we inherited. It should equip the country with a stronger vision for modern apprenticeships, one that remains industry-driven and high-quality, but is also more coherent, more navigable, more inclusive, more data-informed, and more capable of operating at national scale.

## Conclusion

Registered Apprenticeship remains one of America's strongest and most effective workforce strategies. It works because it connects learning to work, ties training to real employer demand,

rewards skill acquisition with wages and advancement, and offers a powerful alternative to disconnected education and training pathways.

Congress has a unique opportunity to strengthen apprenticeship for the next generation. The goal of one million apprentices and beyond is achievable, but only if the country moves from cycles of progress and disruption to a sustained commitment to scale, quality, and broader system transformation. That transformation requires further investment, greater innovation across the apprenticeship ecosystem, clearer federal, state, industry, education, labor, and intermediary roles, seamless pathways from pre-apprenticeship through degree apprenticeship, sustained efforts to promote quality and scale, and congressional action to modernize and reauthorize the National Apprenticeship Act.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. I appreciate the Committee’s leadership on these issues and JFF looks forward to working with Congress and the administration to build a connected, innovative, and scalable apprenticeship system that ensures there are no dead ends to economic opportunity.

## Endnotes

1. Jobs for the Future, “[Reaching the Goal of One Million Apprenticeships: A National Strategy to Scale Registered Apprenticeship in the U.S.](#),” May 26, 2026.
2. Jobs for the Future, “[Policy Blueprint to Modernize and Expand Apprenticeship Nationwide](#),” 2026.
3. Jobs for the Future, “[Manufacturing and Agriculture Apprenticeship Intermediary](#),” January 17, 2024.
4. Debbie Reed et al., “[An Effectiveness Assessment and Cost-Benefit Analysis of Registered Apprenticeship in 10 States](#),” final report prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, July 25, 2012.
5. Social Finance, “[Reaching One Million Active Apprentices Starts with Retention—And Investments in the Right Supports](#),” November 7, 2025.
6. Daniel Kuehn, Siobhan Mills De La Rosa, Robert Lerman, and Kevin Hollenbeck, “[Do Employers Earn Positive Returns to Investments in Apprenticeship? Evidence from Registered Programs under the American Apprenticeship Initiative](#),” report prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, 2022.
7. U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Department of Commerce, and U.S. Department of Education, “[America’s Talent Strategy: Building the Workforce for the Golden Age](#),” August 2025.
8. Jobs for the Future, “[Industry Intermediary Contract for Manufacturing and Agriculture Sectors](#),” and related program materials.