

THE SKILLS GAP IS REAL. THE PROSPER ACT CAN FIX IT.

Since the last reauthorization of the *Higher Education Act*, our country faced the worst economic recession in a generation, forever transforming the American workforce and the postsecondary education landscape. A decade since the recession began, the American workforce faces a shortage of 6 million skilled workers. Federal requirements are stifling interaction between businesses and college campuses and are setting up a generation of Americans for failure. Colleges and universities need to provide their students the opportunity to develop the skills necessary to succeed in the workforce.

- Expanding student access to, and participation in, industry-led earn-and-learn programs, including apprenticeships, that lead to <u>high-wage</u>, <u>high-skill</u>, and <u>high-demand careers</u> by supporting partnerships between businesses and colleges.
- Allowing students to use federal student aid, including Pell Grants, for shorter-term programs that will help students get into the workforce more quickly.
- Permitting new providers of higher education to collaborate with traditional colleges and universities to offer educational programs that are eligible for student aid.
- Significantly increasing the authorization of the Federal Work-Study program
 by including funding previously allocated to other
 campus-based aid programs.

 FEWER THAN <<<<<<
- Eliminating the arbitrary cap that prevents more than 25 percent of an institution's Federal Work-Study dollars from flowing to students working at private-sector companies.
- Equalizing the federal matching share of funds in Federal Work-Study to 50 percent for all types of student employment, thereby encouraging students to find a job relevant to career interests.
- Permitting institutions to use more of their Federal
 Work-Study allocation to locate and develop work-based
 learning jobs for students that align with the students' career goals.
- Removing onerous community service requirements in Federal Work-Study. This change allows for increased work-based learning opportunities aligned to a student's academic or career interests.
- Allowing institutions to use institutional aid to develop and implement career-specific programs.
- Requiring <u>business representation</u> on accreditation boards.

