

March XX, 2020

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
136 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee of Labor-HHS-Education  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
125 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray,

As you develop the Fiscal Year 2021 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill, we urge you to provide robust funding for the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins), Basic State Grant program (Title I). Perkins provides the principal source of federal support for program improvement, and helps to strengthen the integration of academic and career and technical education (CTE) at secondary and postsecondary institutions.

Perkins CTE programs provide a substantial return on investment while consistently evolving to meet the needs of students and employers. These programs teach students transferable skills to ensure college and career readiness, and retrain adult workers who need to adapt their skills for a changing job market. Providing a robust investment in Perkins would support the 12 million CTE students across the country, the business community that relies on a qualified workforce, and the future economic competitiveness of our country.

We are pleased that Perkins Basic State Grants were funded at \$1.283 billion in Fiscal Year (FY) 2020, but this funding still has not kept pace with the growing demand for CTE. We must do more to support high schools, technical centers, and community colleges across the country. The erosion of Perkins funding has resulted in CTE institutions providing fewer opportunities for teacher professional development, deferring purchase of up-to-date industry-standard equipment for the classroom, and limiting program capacity despite growing student-demand.

Furthermore, the passage of the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act, now Public Law No.: 115-224, reaffirmed Congress' commitment to CTE. Implementing the law's new requirements around accountability, equity, and program quality will require a significant investment of resources at the state and local levels. This makes it even more essential that Perkins receive robust funding in FY21.

For the many reasons outlined here, we respectfully request that the Perkins State Grant program receive robust funding for FY21. Thank you for your continued leadership and your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,