



Policy Brief – Workforce Development

Congress should pass legislation to fund career and technical education programs that provide a strong education pathway towards careers in manufacturing.

Background

As manufacturing in the U.S. continues to regain strength, employers in the printing and packaging sector face increasing challenges in finding high-quality talent to fill open positions. A study by Deloitte and The Manufacturing Institute reveals nearly 3.5 million manufacturing jobs will need to be filled over the next decade. However, because of anticipated economic expansion and the large number of expected retirements, current projections forecast nearly 2 million of those jobs will remain unfilled. These shortages have considerable business implications and will hold back future economic growth.*

Industry Position

Demand-driven and experience-based education is a critical workforce need that can be addressed both by federal government funding and through public-private partnerships. Efforts to educate and advance the manufacturing workforce must include input from the business community to help develop strategies, programs and curriculum that address skill and labor shortages. High-quality Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, supported by the Perkins Act, are an effective tool for improving student outcomes and help prepare both secondary and postsecondary students with the necessary academic, technical and employability skills required for successful entry into the workforce. CTE prepares students both for college and careers and is critical to meeting the needs of the 21st century economy. Additionally, closer alignment of education and training programs to local or regional workforce demands are critical to ensuring students and workers are prepared for the challenges of a high-skilled, dynamic workplace.

115th Congress & White House

The bi-partisan **H.R. 2353 (Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act)**, would work to ensure our nation's students have access to important educational opportunities that support a manufacturing talent pipeline by teaching the necessary skills to be successful in today's manufacturing work environment. On May 7th, this bill passed unanimously out of the House Committee on Education & Workforce; **industry urges a "yes" full House vote.** A similar vote passed the House last Congress by a vote of 405-5, but stalled in the Senate. **Industry urges the Senate to advance companion legislation this year to achieve funding of the Perkins Act in 2017.**

*Source: National Association of Manufacturers (2017)

