

Reauthorize the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act

Congress has begun the process of reauthorizing the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE) Act. The House Education and the Workforce Committee held two hearings in 2013 and discussions were initiated by the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee staff. The committees focused on first reauthorizing the Workforce Investment Act (now known as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) and then turned their attention to the Higher Education Act. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that Congress will complete the reauthorization process for Perkins CTE this year.

The administration offered its vision 2 years ago with the release of the U.S. Department of Education's *Investing in America's Future: A Blueprint for Transforming Career and Technical Education*. The blueprint provides recommendations for changes to the Perkins CTE programs grouped under the themes of alignment, collaboration, accountability, and innovation. The report also emphasized the need to strengthen collaboration between secondary and postsecondary education as well as focusing more on high-demand occupations. Of the recommendations, two have received significant attention including a proposal to change the funding model within states to a competitive one focused on consortia of institutions, and a plan for a state-matching fund to incentivize greater business involvement in the programs.

AACC Recommendations for the Reauthorization of Perkins CTE:

- Establish uniform accountability metrics within the Perkins CTE programs and across related programs, drawing from the Voluntary Framework of Accountability. Currently, states vary widely in how they measure Perkins performance.
- Sharpen the focus on high-quality CTE programs at the national level while preserving flexibility at the state and local levels to deliver these programs.
- Facilitate, but not require, secondary/postsecondary consortia.
- Make the application process more rigorous, particularly with regards to showing the alignment between funded programs and industry needs, rather than requiring competitive funding.