

## Perkins Reauthorization Moving Forward

# WDC News

USCM Workforce Development Council



## Weekly Newsletter

May 2, 2016

Please Visit our Website at: [www.uscmwdc.org](http://www.uscmwdc.org)

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## Washington Update

### Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act

Senators Mike Enzi (WY) and Bob Casey (PA) are working on a bill to rewrite the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, which sets policy on career and technical education. For years, lawmakers have discussed rewriting the Perkins Act but it has often been pushed to the sidelines while education committees worked on other priorities – such as last year’s Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Perkins addresses an attractive policy area for lawmakers – skills training – and hasn’t been updated since 2006. It could possibly be spun as a jobs bill. There are issues that could derail any attempt to rewrite the law, including a potential battle over Perkins’ dated funding formula, which give some states disproportionate resources. Some advocates are hoping the local control trend will prevail if Congress moves on the legislation.

### College Promise

On Monday, April 25, the White House launched a \$100 million competition for partnerships that link community colleges with employers and workforce training organizations to expand tuition-free community college programs and builds on President Obama’s goal of making community college free for all students. The competition for “America’s Promise Grants” will begin this summer and be funded by the Department of Labor’s H-1B visa program, which allows employers to hire non-

immigrant workers in specialty occupations. The new grant program is designed to engage employers in identifying the competencies needed for jobs in high demand regionally, and offer chances to build those skills through work-based learning, internships, or paid work experience. The program envisions community colleges teaming up with employers, and also organizations that provide job training. Grants aren't only for new projects, they will also be given to pilots and to expand partnerships. The White House also used the announcement to praise new programs created under the America's College Promise initiative, which is supported with state and federal money. Officials said that at least 27 programs have been created that use \$70 million in public and private investments to help 40,000 students attend community college for free. The White House Fact Sheet, an informational article and social media talking points are below for your information.

[Click here](#) to read the full White House fact sheet.

[Click here](#) to read the article.

[Click here](#) to read White House Communications Points.

## **In The Red Act**

On Thursday, April 28, Representatives Tammy Duckworth (IL), Bobby Scott (VA), Ruben Hinojosa (TX), and Joe Courtney (CT) introduced a comprehensive package of fully paid-for reforms to make college more affordable for all Americans. The *In the Red Act* would help put the nation on a path toward debt-free college, increase the maximum Pell Grant to keep pace with skyrocketing costs, invest in the country's community colleges, enable borrowers to refinance student debt at lower interest rates and increase accountability among colleges and universities to ensure students are receiving high-value degrees and credentials. The bill's authors would pay for that "debt-free college" by closing tax loopholes for corporations and hedge fund managers, as well as enacting a so-called Buffett Rule. The bill would also allow borrowers to refinance their student loans at lower interest rates - saving more than 24 million student loan borrowers billions of dollars in interest - roughly \$1,896 each, and it would require states and colleges to maintain academic quality.

## **Technical Education Creates High-Paying Careers Act**

On Friday, April 29, Representatives Elizabeth Esty (CT), Jim Himes (CT), Joe Courtney (CT), and Mike Quigley (IL) introduced the Technical Education Creates High-Paying Careers (TECH Careers) Act, a bill to expand innovative community college and technical programs so more Americans can break into high-demand fields with good paying careers. The TECH Careers Act provides federal support for job-training programs at technical and community colleges that provide wrap-around services and apprenticeship programs for students. By creating partnerships with industry representatives, these job-training programs help students complete their technical education with well-established relationships with employers in their industry.

## **Initial Jobless Claims**

On Thursday, April 28, the Department of Labor (DOL) issued its weekly report on new filings for unemployment insurance and, in the week ending April 23, the initial jobless claims were 257,000, an increase of 9,000 from the previous week's unrevised level of 248,000. The 4-week moving average was 256,000, a decrease of 4,750 from the previous week's unrevised average of 260,750. The advanced seasonally adjusted insured unemployment rate was 1.6 percent for the week ending April 16, unchanged from the previous week's unrevised level.

[Click here](#) to read the full report.

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## Upcoming Meeting

The U.S. Conference of Mayors 84th Annual Meeting  
Workforce Development Council (WDC) Board/Annual Meeting  
June 24-25, 2016  
Indianapolis, IN

The WDC Board/Annual Meeting will be held from **June 24-25, 2016**, as part of The U.S. Conference of Mayors 84<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in Indianapolis, IN. **All WDC members are welcome to attend!**

[Click here](#) to access the **WDC updated agenda (as of 4/15/16)** for your information.

You may now register and request hotel accommodations online at <https://secure.usmayors.org/registration/>. Please scroll down the screen to select the **Workforce Development Council** link to access the WDC registration form.

**Be sure to have a method of payment ready for the hotel reservation when you register online. You must complete both forms at the same time. Once the registration is submitted, the online system does not accept revisions.**

If you prefer, you can complete your registration form manually. To access the registration and hotel reservation forms [click here](#). Please complete the form and fax it to our meetings' department at (202) 223-9540. The deadline for guaranteed hotel accommodations is **May 27, 2016**.

**Mayors will meet on June 24-27, 2016.** [Click here](#) to access the mayors' **updated draft agenda**.

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## New from DOL/ETA

### ***Labor Department Awards \$112 Million in Grants for Re-Employment Services, Eligibility Assessments in 50 States, Territories***

On Wednesday, April 27, the Department of Labor (DOL) awarded \$112 million to 50 state and territorial workforce agencies, including those in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and the District of Columbia, to operate reemployment services and eligibility assessments programs for those receiving unemployment insurance benefits. Estimates based on the budgets in the past 10 years show that the program has reduced individual use of UI services by approximately one-and-a-half weeks, saving on average \$3 for every dollar spent in costs. This is the 12th year that the department has awarded grants through this initiative. Recipients prioritize RESEA services to transitioning, honorably discharged veterans and individuals likely to exhaust their UI benefits. The funds will be used to connect participants with in-person assessments and re-employment services through their local their local American Job Centers including developing an individual re-employment plan; providing relevant and timely labor market information, identifying job skills and employment prospects; and reviewing claimant's continued eligibility for UI benefits.

[Click here](#) to read the full article.

## ***Applauding Apprenticeship and Its Supporters***

Addressing more than 600 business owners, union contractors and union officers from the United States, Canada, Australia and Ireland, Secretary of Labor Thomas E. Perez spoke about the opportunity for apprenticeship to grow the middle class during the 8th United Association Tripartite Conference. It was held at UA Local Union 597 Training Center in Mokena, Ill., on April 26. Perez highlighted the important role that unions and collective bargaining have played in building the middle class and thanked UA's leadership for supporting apprenticeships. "The union movement owns the original patent on apprenticeship and skills training," Perez said. "For more than a century, UA specifically has been on the apprenticeship cutting-edge—meeting the highest possible standards and enjoying the highest possible placement rates, and providing opportunity for underrepresented populations and guiding thousands of people to successful and rewarding careers. When unions succeed, America succeeds because we strengthen the middle class." President Obama has set a high bar to double the number of apprenticeships in the coming years. To that end, the department recently made the largest-ever federal investment in apprenticeship —\$175 million in grants awarded last fall, with Congress appropriating \$90 million more for this year. Perez also took the opportunity to praise William Hite, the general president of United Association, for a lifetime devoted to the labor movement, middle-class values and the dignity of work. Hite is a third-generation UA member and served more than a decade as president. He will be retiring at the end of the year.

## ***TEGL: Work Opportunity Tax Credit Funding Allotments for FY16***

On Friday, April 29, the Department of Labor (DOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) released the Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) *Work Opportunity Tax Credit Funding Allotments for FY16* to provide the State Workforce Agencies with final funding allotments for the remainder of FY16 for the administration of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit program.

[Click here](#) to read the full TEGL.

## ***TEGL: Change 1 to ApprenticeshipUSA Funding Announcement: State Accelerator Grants***

On Wednesday, April 27, the Department of Labor (DOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) released the Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) *Change 1 to ApprenticeshipUSA Funding Announcement: State Accelerator Grants* to correct the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number in the TEGL, which is required to apply for ApprenticeshipUSA funding.

[Click here](#) to read the full TEGL.

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# **WDC in the News**

## ***Connecting Credentials***

In the 21st century workforce, workers need more than a high school diploma to land most jobs, particularly jobs that lead to advancement. The good news is that the U.S. has a variety of pathways to higher education, ranging from four-year colleges and universities to employer-based training programs to coding camps and beyond, and each comes with a different type of credential representing postsecondary attainment. The bad news is that despite this vast and varied landscape of postsecondary credentials, there's no common language that enables users to compare and connect them; no system to assure credentials are of quality and relevant in the workplace; and no

repository where users can easily obtain relevant information about credentials. The result is a fragmented, dysfunctional credentialing system that's out of sync with 21st century needs. To date there are more than 95 national organizations that are co-sponsoring a national dialogue aimed at creating a better credentialing system -one that is student-centered and learning-based.

Lumina Foundation and the Corporation for a Skilled Workforce, which are supporting this effort, and the co-sponsoring organizations are convinced that such a system is needed for several reasons: to ensure educational quality; increase access; align industry, education and issuers of credentials; multiply the benefits of increased attainment; reduce social inequity; and foster individual progress that results in market-valued credentials. During the past year, more than 2,000 credentialing stakeholders from business, labor, education, credential issuers, and policy groups have engaged in meetings, webinars and on-line conversation to consider why improving credentialing is urgent to tackle now, to define what key issues must be tackled, and to develop recommendations for actions at all levels to make needed improvements. There are a variety of resources on credentialing available through Connecting Credentials. The initiative's website provides easy access to: the latest developments related to credentials; tools such as the beta Credentials Framework and other competency frameworks you can use in your work; a trove of related U.S. and international research and papers; a searchable data base on credential-related reform initiatives underway; information on upcoming webinars and recordings of past webinars; video clips from strategic meetings and presentations; and a blog that enables you to add your voice to the national dialogue.

[Click here](#) to access the website.

### ***Florida Summit***

Save the Date! This year's Florida Workforce Professional Development Summit will be held September 26th through September 28th, 2016 at the Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress Hotel in Orlando, Florida. Sponsor registration is currently under way. Individual registration will begin June 1st, 2016.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

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## **Reports, Announcements and Articles**

### **New from American Youth Policy Forum**

#### ***Soft Skills: Anything but Soft***

I recently stumbled upon Andy Calkins' 2015 blog post on the outdated terms "non-cognitive" and "soft skills." The post was a reflection on his time spent at last year's SXSWedu conference, during which he heard the terms used numerous times, despite the groans of dissatisfaction that came along with them. Having just returned from this year's SXSWedu conference, I must say, not much has changed. We still dislike those terms and the way they reflect (or don't reflect) the skills needed to thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Yet we still, begrudgingly, use them. As education is not always at the top of the list of "cutting edge" fields, it was exciting and quite inspiring to see so much innovation and momentum in the education space. It was evident, however, that although we've made progress in some areas like technology and instruction, we still have a long way to go in others. The terms "non-cognitive" and "soft skills" have increased in ubiquity, yet the distaste for the words has become ubiquitous as well. Critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, grit, leadership, decision-making – these skills indubitably require a level of cognitive function, so the term "non-cognitive" is a misnomer. There's also nothing "soft" about them. In fact, the implication that skills like grit and problem solving

are “soft” is counter to the idea (and evidence) that these skills are just as (if not more) critical to success as other “hard” skills like algebra and reading comprehension.

[Click here](#) to read the full article.

## **New from Workforce Data Quality Campaign**

### ***Workforce Data Explained: Connecting Certification Data to Workforce Success***

Workforce Data Quality Campaign’s latest video showcases the Workforce Credentials Coalition and its mission of ensuring better alignment between academic and industry-based credentials to help students, employers, certification providers, and community colleges.

[Click here](#) to watch the video.

[Click here](#) to read the full post.

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## **ETA Releases**

<https://www.doleta.gov/usworkforce/#whatsnew>

["Financing Workforce Development in a Devolutionary Era": A New Paper from the Atlanta Federal Reserve](#)

April 28, 2016

[NTIA Releases "Planning a Community Broadband Roadmap"; New Toolkit Includes Six-Step Approach to the Task, Best Practices, and Case Studies](#)

April 28, 2016

[WIOA Partners: OCTAE Announces Final Priorities, Requirements, Definitions, and Selection Criteria for the "Performance Partnerships Pilots for Disconnected Youth"](#)

April 28, 2016

[Department of Labor Awards \\$112 Million to States and Territories for Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments](#)

April 27, 2016

[Department of Labor Publishes "The Employer's Guide to the Family and Medical Leave Act"](#)

April 27, 2016

[Department of Labor Publishes Thirty-Day Notice for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Common Performance Reporting](#)

April 26, 2016

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## **Fast Fact**

***Only four of the twenty fastest growing occupations in America require a Bachelor's degree or better.***

