

# TOMORROW'S WORKFORCE COALITION

October 25, 2023

**The Honorable Jason Smith**  
*Chair, Committee on Ways & Means*  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**RE: Support for the Freedom to Invest in Tomorrow's Workforce Act (H.R. 1477) – 10.25.23 Hearing on “Educational Freedom and Opportunity for American Families, Students, and Workers”**

**Dear Chairman Smith:**

Thank you for calling today's hearing to examine “Educational Freedom and Opportunity for American Families, Students, and Workers.” The Tomorrow's Workforce Coalition (Coalition) and its more than 725 member businesses, trade associations, professional societies and nonprofits are especially thankful for your consideration of the bipartisan *Freedom to Invest in Tomorrow's Workforce Act* (H.R. 1477).

The Coalition urges you to advance this beneficial workforce policy as soon as practicable, and we are grateful you invited a coalition member representative, the Commercial Vehicle Training Association, to testify.

As background, H.R. 1477 would expand qualified expenses under 529 plans to include postsecondary skills training and credentialing programs, such as licenses and voluntary, nongovernmental certifications. On September 27, the Coalition sent the enclosed sign-on letter to you and Ranking Member Neal advocating for H.R. 1477 “so that students, families and workers can better access the credentials and skills training that help grow strong, resilient careers.”

Representatives Rob Wittman and Abigail Spanberger champion the bill, which 75 bipartisan Members of Congress cosponsor (47 Republicans and 28 Democrats). Seven Republican Members of the Ways and Means Committee also support the proposal.

The bill would establish statutory language—rather than test the uncertainty of future regulation—to ensure that legitimate credentialing and training programs are indeed recognized. The points below further highlight how H.R. 1477 can strengthen the workforce and help build up the economy:

- **The Joint Committee on Taxation scored the bill at \$85 million over 10 years.** The Coalition is pleased that the 2019 *SECURE Act* (P.L. 116-94) expanded 529 plans to include apprenticeship programs and some K-12 tuition, which will cost \$200 million over the same length of time.
- **H.R. 1477 would empower Americans of any educational background**, skill level or age, and would benefit all industries and professions that rely on employees with specific training or credentials.

- **The bill would provide valuable tax-advantaged resources for students and workers**—with or without a college degree—who pursue career growth, mid-career changes or career pathways that diverge from a typical academic degree.
- **Across all accounts nationwide, 529s contain approximately \$450 billion.**<sup>1</sup>
- **Approximately 40 million licensed and non-governmentally certified professionals work across the U.S. economy**<sup>2</sup> and would benefit from increased access to continuing education and training, technical expertise and career specialization.

The *Freedom to Invest in Tomorrow's Workforce Act* is straightforward, bipartisan and would support working families by shifting the 529 paradigm from “college savings plans” to “career savings plans.”

Thank you for convening this important hearing, for the opportunity to provide comments and for your attention to the *Freedom to Invest in Tomorrow's Workforce Act*. Please email Jeff Evans ([jevans@asaecenter.org](mailto:jevans@asaecenter.org)), director of public policy for the American Society of Association Executives, if you or your staff have questions.

Sincerely,

**The Tomorrow's Workforce Coalition**

[Member Roster](#) – Updated 10.23.2023 (727 organizations)

**CC**

**The Honorable Richard Neal**

*Ranking Member, Committee on Ways & Means*  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**The Honorable Mike Kelly**

*Chair, Subcommittee on Tax Policy*  
Committee on Ways & Means  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**The Honorable Mike Thompson**

*Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Tax Policy*  
Committee on Ways & Means  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**ENCLOSURE**

- [9.27.23 Coalition Sign-On Letter](#)
- [Coalition and legislation one-pager](#)
- [H.R. 1477 text](#)

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<sup>1</sup> College Savings Plan Network – [2023 Mid-Year Graphic](#)

<sup>2</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics – [Current Population Survey](#), 2022 Annual Averages