



DECEMBER 22, 2017

House Higher Education reauthorization bill introduced

On December 1, House Education and Workforce Committee Chairwoman Virginia Foxx introduced the Promoting Real



Opportunity, Success, and Prosperity through Education Reform (PROSPER) Act. If signed into law, the PROSPER Act would reauthorize the Higher Education Act (HEA).

The bill makes some changes to expand financial aid to short-term and competency-based programs that help students get and keep good jobs, but it does little to ensure industry engagement or to align credentials with employer demands. The bill also eliminates or reduces a number of key student support programs that are particularly important for working adults and the majority of today's college students, and fails to make needed changes in the way we measure and report student outcomes. [Read NSC's full statement on the bill here](#) and a [full analysis](#) on our Skills Blog.

The PROSPER Act passed out of committee just before midnight on December 12, 2017, by a party-line vote of 23-17. More than sixty amendments were offered, and fewer than twenty were incorporated into the final bill. [Read about the amendments.](#)

While the PROSPER Act does offer some potentially useful investments in work study, apprenticeship, and other workforce development strategies, this partisan bill doesn't do enough to make it easier for individuals to get the skills and credentials they need to advance their careers. NSC looks forward to working with Chairwoman Foxx to improve this bill to ensure we are doing the best we can for students.

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[Expanding Apprenticeships Across More Jobs](#) | *Inside Higher Ed*, 12.1.17

[Loan Limits, Regulatory Rollback in New Higher Education Bill](#) | *Bloomberg*, 12.1.17

[Let's tax college endowments to pay for students' education](#) | *The Hill*, 12.1.17

[Not all businesses like the GOP tax cuts. Just ask some big local industries](#) | *Boston Globe*, 12.4.17

['Too Much, Too Fast?'](#) | *Inside Higher ED*, 12.14.17

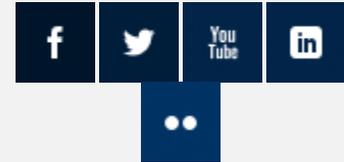
Action Alert: We can't compete if we cut!

As Congress works to reach an agreement to fund government for 2018, the proposals they're currently considering include drastic cuts to workforce education and training programs. These cuts would have a direct impact on our workforce, our industries, and our economy. We're sending a letter to Congressional leadership urging them to invest in vital programs that help workers earn skills businesses need - [sign your organization on now!](#) And while you're on the sign on page, share your story with us about how cuts would make it harder to do the work you're doing to skill up your community and local businesses.



[Editorial: Head wants a governor's school for career and technical education](#) | *The Roanoke Times*, 12.14.17

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National Skills Coalition releases SNAP E&T reauthorization recommendations

With Congress expected to begin consideration of a new Farm Bill early next year, National Skills Coalition released recommendations for strengthening the SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) program as part of the reauthorization process. The recommendations – which were developed in consultation with a range of national and local partners – would build on key policy improvements made in the 2014 Farm bill and expand access to high-quality, skills-based training models for SNAP recipients seeking to get and keep well-paying jobs. [See the recommendations in the Skills Blog.](#)



Employers & community colleges respond to HEA bill on Capitol Hill

Thirty-five business leaders from fifteen states, together with representatives from area community colleges, came to D.C. the first week of December to talk with their members of Congress about the skills mismatch they are facing in their communities. They spoke to lawmakers about how they coordinate to create a pipeline of skilled workers in their communities. They also suggested ways policymakers could



better support these efforts - in particular, they expressed support for expanding Pell grants to cover short-term programs. The fly-in was incredibly timely, as the meetings were scheduled within days of introduction of the PROSPER Act, the House bill to update the Higher Education Act. Though the HEA bill isn't perfect, it did reflect some of [Business Leaders United's](#) priorities, including expanding Pell grants. [Read more on the BLU site.](#)

Don't forget to register for the 2018 Skills Summit

The 2018 Skills Summit is scheduled for

February 6-8 at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C., with plenaries and content-rich sessions. [Check out our 2018 Skills Summit webpage](#) to view the agenda and [register](#) now to join colleagues from across the country to advance a national skills agenda and influence a range of federal policies. Make sure you take advantage of our hotel block at the Omni Shoreham at \$219/per night (\$40 less per night than last year!).



WDQC hosts "Energized for Evidence" DC Fly-In

WDQC hosted its fourth annual Fly-In, "Energized for Evidence," in Washington D.C. last week. The two-day conference brought together 24 state

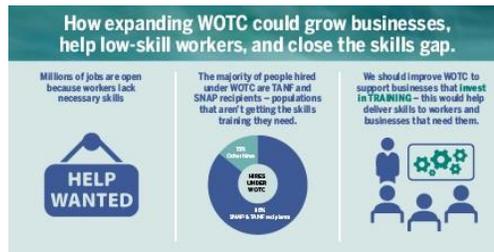


representatives, as well as national organizations and federal government representatives to discuss various topics related to data collection and use. The event featured discussions about the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking, the College Transparency Act, updates from federal agencies, non-degree credential measurement, and how states can learn from each other. The conference concluded with a briefing on Capitol Hill to showcase how states are helping students with outcome data on postsecondary programs and how similar efforts are needed nationwide. [Learn more about the event.](#)

NSC releases new recommendations to update the Work Opportunity Tax Credit

On December 7, National Skills Coalition released a new brief,

Opportunity Knocks: How expanding the Work Opportunity Tax Credit could grow businesses, help low-skill workers, and close the skills gap. Businesses continue to struggle to find workers, and at the same time millions of low-skill workers lack the training to meet those business needs. Work-based learning programs offer one strategy for businesses to skill-up workers, while providing those workers with access to a paying job. These programs, however, are expensive, and there is no current tax credit that focuses on the costs businesses incur when providing work-based learning for low-skill workers. [Learn more.](#)



NSC and New America, with eleven national partners, launch Apprenticeship Forward Collaborative

National Skills Coalition and New America, along with eleven national partners committed to expanding U.S. apprenticeship, are launching the Apprenticeship Forward Collaborative. The group will collect and share information on emerging trends and best practices in apprenticeship from across the country. We will highlight how apprenticeship can break into new industry sectors and serve a more diverse population of learners and workers. [Learn about the Collaborative in the blog.](#)



NSC welcomes new staff

Over the past few months, NSC has welcomed three new members to the team.

[Michael Richardson](#), who joined us in

September is the new

Upskilling Policy Analyst, working to support the

advancement of NSC's skills equity platform. [Katie Brown](#),

with NSC since October, is a Senior Federal Policy Analyst,



focusing on post-secondary education. Finally, this month we welcomed [Melissa Johnson](#), Senior State Policy Analyst, who will work to advance NSC's platform in the states.

We're excited to have Michael, Katie and Melissa on our team and look forward to what the next year will bring!

On the road with NSC

- On December 5 in Tucson, Arizona, WDQC Director Bryan Wilson spoke at the Occupational Licensing Consortium organized by the [National Conference of State Legislatures](#), [National Governors Association](#), and [Council of State Governments](#). The Consortium includes teams of officials from eleven states.
 - Bryan also spoke on aligning postsecondary education with employer demand at [Third Way's](#) "Using Data To Get To and Through College," on December 11 at the U.S. Capitol.
 - Policy Analyst Jenna Leventoff facilitated discussion about the challenges and opportunities related to the future of credentials at the ["University Professional and Continuing Education Association \(UPCEA\) Convening"](#) in Washington, D.C.
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