



## NATIONAL CONFERENCE *of* STATE LEGISLATURES

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*Executive Director*

July 10, 2017

The Honorable Lamar Alexander  
Chairman  
Committee on Health, Education,  
Labor, and Pensions  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Health, Education,  
Labor, and Pensions  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Murray:

On behalf of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) we urge you to support H.R. 2353, the Strengthening Career and Technical Education (CTE) for the 21st Century Act.

This bipartisan bill would reauthorize the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, and provide increased authority to states for the funding and execution of CTE programs. The bill aligns CTE program standards with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) while strengthening the existing prohibitions on a federal curriculum, and mandates. In addition, it increases the state funding reservation from 10 to 15 percent, and would allow states to use that money for their own competitive-grant or other funding streams in support of CTE programs. This would provide states greater flexibility to allocate funding in such a way that targets state specific education and economic needs. The bill also encourages collaboration with local stakeholders by allowing states to submit a CTE-focused state plan alongside their Workforce Development Activity plans under WIOA.

Specifically, NCSL supports additional federal funding for CTE programs and preservation of state authority in program execution. We feel strongly that the federal government should support state flexibility and authority to allocate some funds through competitive grants administered by the state in pursuit and support of innovative, high quality and effective programs. Further, NCSL believes funding decisions are best handled at the state level so that allocation of funds can be used most effectively for each individual state to incentivize and modernize their programs to meet the evolving needs of students.

For these reasons, NCSL is very supportive of H.R. 2353, as it will give states more flexibility to help close the skills gap and preparing students for highly skilled occupations and careers.

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July 10, 2017

p. 2

As you know, the House passed H.R. 2353 unanimously by voice vote, and we encourage the Senate to pass this bill quickly so it can be signed into law.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact NCSL staff Jon Jukuri (Jon.Jukuri@ncsl.org) and Lucia Bragg (Lucia.Bragg@ncsl.org) or call NCSL's D.C. office at (202) 624-5400.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maggie Carlton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**The Honorable Maggie Carlton**  
Nevada State Assembly  
Co-Chair, NCSL Labor & Economic Development Committee

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Terri Haverly". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**The Honorable Terri Haverly**  
South Dakota Senate  
Co-Chair, NCSL Labor & Economic Development Committee