

LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Resolution LWD-19-40

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE EXPANSION OF OCCUPATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) recognizes from the research that a postsecondary education or training has become more essential for economic success;

WHEREAS, in October 2018, there were 6.1 million unemployed Americans, yet the U.S. Department of Labor reported that there were 7.136 million jobs openings on the last business day of August because many companies are struggling to find qualified workers to fill the vacancies;

WHEREAS, over the next decade 3.4 million manufacturing jobs will become available as baby boomers retire and the economy expands, but two million of them will go unfilled due to the widening skills gap according to Deloitte and the Manufacturing Institute;

WHEREAS, approximately 45 percent of jobs, according to the Brookings Institution findings of all jobs over the next decade will be in “middle-skill occupations, which will require more than a high school diploma but less than a bachelor’s degree;

WHEREAS, the rate of unemployment for millennials remains high, apprenticeship programs can be an affordable way to “earn while you learn;”

WHEREAS, apprenticeship is an effective and cost-efficient way to provide a solution for companies willing to invest up front to build their current and future workforce;

WHEREAS, apprenticeship is a proven worker training strategy that combines on-the-job training with classroom instructions;

WHEREAS, benefits of the registered apprenticeship programs include incremental wage increases, improved skills, career advancement, enhanced retention and increase productivity;

WHEREAS, registered apprenticeship program has proven to be an efficient way to ensure employer needs are matched with employee skills;

WHEREAS, apprenticeship programs are not properly aligned with the industries that demand the most skilled workers; and

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WHEREAS, that the NBCSL understands apprenticeship programs are heavily concentrated in goods-producing industries while the vast majority of job growth is projected to occur in high-growth service-providing industries, such as healthcare and professional and business services.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) support federal and state legislation and funding for “earn and learn” apprenticeship programs that will prepare workers for the jobs employers will demand;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL encourage and support federal legislation and funding to states that establish new and grow existing programs, build a talent pipeline through pre-apprenticeship and youth apprenticeship, and establish a comprehensive plan to integrate apprenticeship as part of a state’s broader workforce strategy;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL support federal and state legislation that establishes a tax credit program to provide an incentive for employers to work with pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States, members of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate, and other federal and state government officials as appropriate.

SPONSOR: Senator Ronald Rice (NJ)

Committee of Jurisdiction: Labor and Workforce Development Policy Committee

Certified by Committee Chair(s): Senator Ronald L. Rice (NJ) and Senator Will Smith (MD)

Ratified in Plenary Session: Ratification Date is November 30, 2018

Ratification is certified by: Representative Gregory W. Porter (IN), President