



June 8, 2023

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice Chair
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Murray, Chairwoman Granger, Vice Chair Collins and Ranking Member DeLauro,

Chronic workforce shortages are the top challenge facing roofing industry employers across the U.S. as demographic trends make it ever more difficult to find qualified candidates for well-paying, family-sustaining jobs. Increased funding for career and technical education (CTE) is essential to providing strategies and tools to help employers address future workforce development needs.

The roofing industry represents tens of thousands of companies, hundreds of thousands of workers and billions of dollars of economic firepower. The entire supply chain – from raw materials to product manufacturing to jobsite installation – creates one of the most significant economic multipliers in the U.S. construction industry.

As Congress considers federal appropriations for FY 2024, the roofing industry supports increased funding for Perkins Career and Technical Education State Grants, which provide funding for CTE programs operated at the state and local levels. This funding is critical to high schools, community colleges, small businesses and the students who need training to help close the skills gap in today’s workforce in both manufacturing and the construction trades. Perkins CTE State Grants are allocated to all 50 states to invest in CTE efforts critical to employers and students and expanding economic growth within the state.

The roofing industry was pleased to support enactment of the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act in 2018. This law is designed to reform and

expand CTE programs, and it is vital that Congress provide sufficient funding for it to be successful in helping employers meet their workforce needs.

In recent years, congressional appropriations for CTE have not kept pace with growing demand despite the importance of these programs to sustaining economic growth. In fact, the President's Budget proposal of a \$43 million increase in Perkins State Grants is currently estimated to be \$320 million lower than the FY 2004 funding level when adjusted for inflation according to Advance CTE. As such, we urge Congress to give higher priority to investments in this crucial area in the FY 2024 budget. CTE provides access to opportunities for students who want to develop skills, increase their knowledge, and contribute to their communities by pursuing a rewarding career.

Over the past half-century policies that support college bound students have been promoted – from the GI Bill to subsidized student loans. At the same time support for trade schools and their students has not been as robust, leading to fewer students going into the trades. This lack of support is one of the primary reasons that a disproportionate number of the open jobs today are for skilled tradespeople.

The roofing industry supports a robust increase in funding for Perkins State Grants that is critical to providing students with the resources and opportunities they need to excel in their studies and help ensure our nation has the skilled workforce necessary for future.

If you have questions or need more information, please contact Deborah Mazol, National Roofing Contractors Association's director of federal affairs, at dmazol@nrca.net.

Sincerely,

Asphalt Roofing Manufacturers Association
Chemical Fabrics and Film Association (CFFA) - Vinyl Roofing Division
EPDM Roofing Association
International Institute of Building Enclosure Consultants (IIBEC)
Metal Construction Association
National Roofing Contractors Association
National Women in Roofing
Polyisocyanurate Insulation Manufacturers Association
RCMA
SPRI, Inc. (Single Ply Roofing Industry)
Tile Roofing Industry Alliance