



July 20, 2023

The Honorable Bernie Sanders
Chairman
Senate Committee on Health, Education
Labor and Pensions
332 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Cassidy, M.D.
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Health, Education
Labor and Pensions
455 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Virginia Foxx
Chairwoman
House Committee on Education
and the Workforce
2462 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bobby Scott
Ranking Member
House Committee on Education
and the Workforce
2328 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Reauthorization of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Workforce Development Legislation

Dear Chairman Sanders, Ranking Member Cassidy, Chairwoman Foxx and Ranking Member Scott:

The National Demolition Association (NDA) represents nearly 500 U.S. and Canadian companies that offer standard demolition services as well as a full range of demolition-related services and products. NDA educates members on the latest advances in equipment and services, provides educational programs and tools to stay abreast of regulatory and safety matters and keeps regulators informed about issues in our industry. NDA also increases public awareness of the economic and societal benefits of demolition.

NDA writes today to urge your committees to prioritize reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and other workforce development legislation in the 118th Congress that will help employers attract and retain skilled workers. The federal government provides workforce development activities through WIOA's programs and other initiatives designed to increase the employment and earning potential of workers. However, the original authorization of WIOA expired in FY 2020 and is only being renewed on an annual basis through appropriations laws.

For the last several years, NDA has expressed its concerns and raised awareness in Congress about the ongoing labor shortages in the nation's workforce and the negative effects it is having on the demolition industry. Since WIOA expired in FY 2020, employers have faced unprecedented workforce challenges in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the latest data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics released on July 6, 2023, there are currently 9.8 million job openings in the United States.¹ This includes nearly 366,000 unfilled job openings in the construction industry alone. This economic data acutely conveys the difficult challenges facing employers and the urgent need to pass a long-term reauthorization of WIOA and other legislation that will encourage a robust and skilled labor force.

NDA supports policies to address the shortage of qualified candidates for high-skilled jobs and other efforts to increase the pool of qualified candidates for technical jobs on demolition sites. NDA encourages bipartisan solutions to address the labor crisis and calls on Congress to work together on legislation that will strengthen workforce development and help alleviate labor shortages in essential industries, such as demolition. This includes proposals such as new employer tax credits to recruit and train workers, improved programs for career and technical education, and enhanced apprenticeship and job training

¹ [Press release, "Job Openings and Labor Turnover, January 2023," U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, July 6, 2023](#)

initiatives. NDA urges your committees to prioritize the following policies as it examines solutions to America's hiring challenges.

- Support legislation to improve and expand apprenticeship opportunities, vocational training and other work-based learning initiatives to address the shortage of skilled labor in the private sector.
- Support legislation addressing the shortage of qualified candidates for high-skilled jobs by improving and promoting STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education in secondary and postsecondary education settings.
- Support educational programs, such as Pell Grants and the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education program, to boost technical training in secondary and postsecondary education settings.
- Support the use of federal block grants to states for workforce development initiatives.
- Support policies that encourage the training and hiring of military veterans for jobs in the demolition industry.
- Oppose policies that discourage individuals from joining the labor force and negatively impact employee retention.

Several bills have already been introduced in the 118th Congress that reflect the workforce development principles and policies supported by NDA. While not an exhaustive list, Congress should consider the following bills when reauthorizing WIOA or as standalone measures.

- S. 1213 - Training America's Workforce Act
- H.R. 496 - Promoting Employment and Lifelong Learning (PELL) Act
- H.R. 1656 - USA Workforce Tax Credit Act
- H.R. 4685 - Workforce Development Investment Act
- S. 550 - Prioritizing Evidence for Workforce Development Act
- S. 343 - Apprenticeships to College Act
- H.R. 658 - Strengthening Youth Apprenticeships Act
- H.R. 793/S. 161 - Jumpstart Our Businesses by Supporting Students (JOBS) Act of 2023
- H.R. 2900/S. 242 - Apprenticeship Hubs Across America Act
- H.R. 1403/S. 662 - STEM RESTART Act
- H.R. 3804 - Workforce and Education Partnership Act
- H.R. 3416/S. 454 - Youth Workforce Readiness Act

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on this critical issue. NDA looks forward to working with your committees in the coming months on bipartisan legislation to improve the nation's workforce development pipeline and address these challenges in a manner that strengthens the demolition industry. Please contact NDA's Director of Government Affairs Alex McIntyre at amcintyre@demolitionassociation.com with any further questions.

Sincerely,



Jeff Lambert
Chief Executive Officer
National Demolition Association