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THE STUDENT APPRENTICESHIP ACT

Even with low national unemployment, 11 million job positions remain vacant due to a lack of domestic talent with the skills companies need. According to recent labor market reports, employers are struggling to find skilled talent due to a misalignment between postsecondary education and the skills needed in a 21st century workplace.

The Student Apprenticeship Act would close the gap between higher education, business and labor by modernizing workforce training and catalyzing the growth of registered apprenticeships nationwide. Specifically, the Student Apprenticeship Act would:

Promote Collaboration Between Higher Education and Employers

The bill creates a grant program that aligns institutions of higher education, employers, and workforce intermediaries to create apprenticeship opportunities for students:

- As a student and an apprentice, participants would work to earn college credit and an industry credential while their employers pay them;
- Apprenticeships would increase career opportunities in high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand industry sectors or occupations;
- Student-apprentices would earn credits for their work that count towards their degree and their industry credential;
- Program would measure outcomes of student apprenticeship programs to determine success.

Create Competitive Grants to Drive Apprenticeships Expansion

The bill supports the expansion of registered apprenticeships by providing institutions of higher education, employers, and workforce intermediaries with funds to offset the costs associated with developing and implementing student-apprenticeships. This includes:

- Developing curricula and standards;
- Developing on-the-job learning, mentoring, and additional supervision;
- Purchasing updated equipment; and
- Supporting services such as tutoring, transportation, child care, and housing subsidies.

Update Federal Work Study Programs

The bill allows apprenticeship programs to qualify as federal work-study programs so eligible students (who demonstrate financial need) earn additional funds to pay their tuition through work that aligns with their coursework and their intended career path.