

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Moves bipartisan career and technical education legislation forward

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Contact: press@baldwin.senate.gov, 202-224-6225

Reauthorization of Carl D. Perkins CTE Act will raise the quality of Career and Technical Education programs at schools in Wisconsin and across the country

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin joined her colleagues on the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee today in unanimously approving legislation to reauthorize the *Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act*. This measure includes a number of key priorities for Senator Baldwin, a co-chair of the Senate Career and Technical Education (CTE) Caucus, that will raise the quality of CTE programs at schools in Wisconsin and across the country.

The *Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act* will ensure that students have access to the highest-quality CTE programs and provides critical resources to strengthen career pathways for students, close the skills gap, enhance the recruitment of highly-qualified CTE instructors and meet the workforce readiness needs of tomorrow.

“I’ve heard firsthand from students, businesses and manufacturers in Wisconsin and it’s clear that we need to do more to support career and technical education so people are better equipped for the high-skilled jobs of today and tomorrow,” **said Senator Baldwin**. “Career and Technical Education has shown to be one of the most effective ways to respond to our workforce readiness needs so I’m proud to work across party lines on this effort.”

The *Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act* includes major provisions from legislation that Senator Baldwin helped spearhead with her fellow bipartisan co-chairs of the Senate CTE Caucus – Senators Tim Kaine (D-VA), Rob Portman (R-OH) and Todd Young (R-IN) – including the *Educating Tomorrow's Workforce Act* and the *Perkins Equity and Excellence Fund Act*. It also includes language from the *Middle STEP Act*, of which Senator Baldwin is a cosponsor.

Nearly 500 businesses and organizations across the country support the *Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act*. The coalition letter that lists supporting businesses and organizations is available [here](#). The American Federation of Teachers also supports the legislation.

Specifically, the *Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act*:

- Strengthens the definition of what constitutes rigorous CTE curriculum to align with local, regional and state workforce needs;
- Supports and expands partnerships with local businesses, regional industries, institutions of higher education and other community stakeholders;
- Strengthens career pathways by providing students with a continuum of work-based learning opportunities;
- Improves links between secondary and postsecondary education, including through credit-transfer opportunities to obtain credentials that support jobs in high-demand career fields;
- Improves the recruitment and retention of highly effective CTE teachers, school leaders and counselors and supports the integration of professional development opportunities between academic teachers and CTE teachers;
- Creates a fund to support innovative strategies and activities to improve and modernize CTE and align workforce skills with labor market needs;
- Allows states to use Perkins grant funding to establish CTE-focused academies;
- Expands Perkins funding to the middle grades and promotes career exploration in middle schools; and
- Ensures states and school districts provide opportunities for underserved students and special populations to participate in CTE programs.