

U.S. Rep. Fitzgerald: Co-introduces bipartisan Small Business Workforce Pipeline Act

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WASHINGTON, DC —Today, Congressman Scott Fitzgerald (WI-05), Congressman Jason Crow (CO-06), Congressman Andrew Garbarino (NY-02), and Congresswoman Chrissy Houlahan (PA-06), all members of the House Small Business Committee, joined in introducing the bipartisan Small Business Workforce Pipeline Act to help more small businesses offer apprenticeships and on-the-job learning opportunities to their workers. By empowering these businesses to invest in their workforce, the Act is designed to alleviate labor shortages, which have greatly impacted our nation's small businesses.

*"I hear from Wisconsin small businesses every day about our country's labor shortage. Apprenticeships are among the most successful forms of workforce development through paid, on the job training alongside classroom education," **said Congressman Scott Fitzgerald.** This bill will benefit manufacturers and other businesses in Wisconsin's 5th district by having apprenticeship and other job training materials readily available to them."*

*"As we rebuild from the pandemic, many workers are changing paths and looking for different work opportunities. Work-based learning opportunities like apprenticeships are key tools to help these folks reskill and upskill," **said Congressman Jason Crow.** "I'm proud to join Reps. Houlahan, Fitzgerald, and Garbarino in introducing the Small Business Workforce Pipeline Act to connect more workers with apprenticeships that will help them get good jobs while also relieving the labor shortage for our business owners."*

"In the midst of a national worker shortage and an economy that shrunk 1.4% in the

first quarter of this year, we must find new and innovative ways to bolster our workforce and spur economic growth,” **said Congressman Andrew Garbarino.** *“Increasing access to on-the-job training and apprenticeships will not only enable those looking for work to gain the skills necessary for good paying jobs, but also connect workers with small businesses who are struggling under current labor shortages.”*

“The past couple of years changed the landscape of our workforce in ways we couldn’t have predicted,” **said Congresswoman Houlahan.** *“This means Pennsylvanians and all Americans might be looking for new job opportunities in emerging careers, particularly in our technical fields. As an entrepreneur myself, I know how important it is to support workers of all ages and abilities through apprenticeships and job training programs. That’s why I’m happy to announce the bipartisan Small Business Workforce Pipeline Act alongside Reps. Crow, Fitzgerald, and Garbarino to help our workers develop the skills they need for our 21st century economy.”*

For every unemployed individual seeking a job, there are roughly 1.7 job openings in the economy. While many businesses may have no trouble attracting applicants, it is often hard for them to find applicants with the skills they are looking for, and many are now turning to direct investments in their own workforce as a benefit of employment.

Specifically, the Small Business Workforce Pipeline Act empowers Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) to help our nation’s small businesses establish and improve their apprenticeship and job training programs. SBDCs work with the US Small Business Administration (SBA) to provide a suite of counseling and training services to small businesses and this would be an added area of support offered by SBDCs.