

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Joins bipartisan group, introduces bill to help more Americans access high-quality job training, get good-paying jobs

Posted on Wednesday, Feb 1, 2023

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) joined a bipartisan group of senators in reintroducing the *Jumpstarting Our Businesses by Supporting Students (JOBS) Act*. The bipartisan legislation, led by Senators Tim Kaine (D-VA) and Mike Braun (R-IN), will help more Americans get good-paying jobs by allowing students to use federal Pell Grants to afford high-quality, shorter-term job training programs for the first time. Pell Grants are need-based education grants for low-income and working students. As of now, students can only use Pell Grants for two-year and four-year colleges or universities. By expanding Pell Grant eligibility, the *JOBS Act* would help close the skills gap and provide workers with the job training and credentials they need for careers in high-demand fields.

From 2021-2022, the U.S. economy added nearly 11 million jobs, but [workforce participation](#) still remains below pre-pandemic levels, in part because unemployed Americans lack access to the job training needed to fill vacant jobs. Recent legislation passed in Congress, including the bipartisan *Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act*, is expected to create millions of new jobs, but industries are [reporting](#) that there won't be enough skilled workers to fill these openings, underscoring the need for Congress to make investments to train more workers.

“I’ve heard from countless Wisconsin businesses who are struggling to find the skilled workforce they need to maintain and grow their business. By expanding access to affordable education and job training to more Wisconsinites, we can not only grow our Made in WI economy, but also help more Americans find fulfilling

careers in good-paying jobs,” **said Senator Baldwin.** “I’m proud to support the *JOBS Act* because it will provide funding to train and educate the advanced workforce of tomorrow while helping Wisconsin businesses fill family-supporting jobs in manufacturing and the trades.”

Specifically, the *JOBS Act* would amend the *Higher Education Act* by:

- Expanding Pell Grant eligibility to students enrolled in rigorous and high-quality, short-term skills and job training programs that lead to industry-recognized credentials and certificates and ultimately employment in high-wage, high-skill industry sectors or careers
- Ensuring students who receive Pell Grants are earning high-quality postsecondary credentials by requiring that the credentials:
 - Meet the standards under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), such as meaningful career counseling and aligning programs to in-demand career pathways or registered apprenticeship programs
 - Are recognized by employers, industry, or sector partnerships
 - Align with the skill needs of industries in the state or local economy
 - Are approved by the state workforce board in addition to the U.S. Department of Education
- Defining eligible job training programs as those providing career and technical education instruction at an institution of higher education, such as a community or technical college that provides:
 - At least 150 clock hours of instruction time over a period of at least 8 weeks
 - Training that meets the needs of the local or regional workforce and industry partnerships
 - Streamlined ability to transfer credits so students can continue to pursue further education in their careers
 - Students with licenses, certifications, or credentials that meet the hiring requirements of multiple employers in the field for which the job training is offered

In addition to Senators Baldwin, Kaine, and Braun, this legislation is cosponsored by Senators John Barrasso (R-WY), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Susan Collins (R-ME), Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV), Kevin Cramer (R-ND), Steve Daines (R-MT), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Joni Ernst (R-IA), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), John Hickenlooper (D-CO), John Hoeven (R-ND), Cindy Hyde-Smith

(R-MS), Mark Kelly (D-AZ), Angus King (I-ME), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM), Roger Marshall (R-KS), Jon Ossoff (D-GA), Marco Rubio (R-FL), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Kyrsten Sinema (I-AZ), Tina Smith (D-MN), Thom Tillis (R-NC), Tommy Tuberville (R-AL), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Mark R. Warner (D-VA), Roger Wicker (R-MS), and Ron Wyden (D-OR).

The *JOBS Act* is supported by Advance CTE, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE), the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT), the Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM), Business Roundtable, Cengage Group, the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), Higher Learning Advocates (HLA), IBM Corporation, Jobs for the Future (JFF), the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB), the National Skills Coalition (NSC), the Progressive Policy Institute (PPI), Rebuilding America's Middle Class (RAMC), and the Virginia Community College System.

Full text of the bill is available [here](#).

An online version of this release is available [here](#).