

House Approves 5 'Manufacturing Jobs For America' Provisions

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The House of Representatives approved legislation Wednesday that includes five innovative skills-training provisions from the Senate's *Manufacturing Jobs for America* campaign. U.S. Senator Chris Coons (D-Del.), who leads *Manufacturing Jobs for America*, applauded passage of the bipartisan, bicameral *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* (WIOA), which will reauthorize, streamline, and improve the nation's workforce training programs for the first time since 1998. The legislation, which passed the House by a nearly unanimous vote of 415-6, was approved by the Senate in June and now heads to the President for signature.

WIOA modernizes and strengthens national workforce training programs, creating smaller, more strategic state and local workforce development boards and allowing them to tailor programs to meet local needs. The bill also eliminates 15 ineffective or underutilized programs to ensure resources are focused on the most effective initiatives.

"To keep America competitive, we have to make sure our workers have access to effective and relevant job-training," Senator Coons said. "The most in-demand skills vary by region and industry, and training programs need to reflect these diverse and evolving needs. The *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* takes critical steps to better align workforce training programs with local demand and ensure workers have the skillsets manufacturers are looking for. The bipartisan action taken in both chambers to pass this important bill is proof that Congress can still come together to get things done for the middle class. I hope we can continue working together to pass more of the innovative *Manufacturing Jobs for America* bills that are ready for consideration today."

Led by Senator Coons, more than 25 senators have contributed more than 30 bills to the Senate's *Manufacturing Jobs for America* initiative. Roughly one-third of these bills are focused on skills training. Provisions from five of the bills were included in WIOA. They are detailed below:

Adult Education and Economic Growth Act (S. 1400)

Jack Reed (D-R.I.), Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio)

WIOA includes key portions of S.1400, which seeks to increase investment in adult education, expand access to technology and digital literacy skills for adult learners, require better coordination and integration of adult education with state workforce development systems and postsecondary education, and strengthen English and civics education for new Americans.

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America Works Act (S. 453)

Kay Hagan (D-N.C.), Joe Donnelly (D-Ind.), Dean Heller (R-Nev.), Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.), Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.)

WIOA includes provisions from S. 453, which seeks to prioritize federal funding for job training programs that offer portable, national and industry-recognized credentials. This reform would promote job-training programs that match the skills of workers with the needs of local employers, thereby training individuals for the jobs that are available in their communities right now.

On-the-Job Training Act (S. 1227)

Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.), Thad Cochran (R-Miss.)

WIOA includes aspects of S. 1227, to significantly expand opportunities for on-the-job-training. WIOA requires state workforce investment boards to disseminate information identifying on-the-job-training opportunities and boosts incentives for employers to participate in on-the-job-training programs.

SECTORS Act (S. 1226)

Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio), Bob Casey (D-Pa.), Susan Collins (R-Maine), Dick Durbin (D-Ill.)

WIOA includes provisions from S.1226 to require state and local Workforce Investment Boards to establish sector-based partnerships between employers, educators, and local workforce administrators to train workers for the most in-demand 21st century jobs.

Community College to Career Fund (S. 1269)

Al Franken (D-Minn.), Mark Begich (D-Alaska), Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii)

WIOA includes aspects of S.1269 to create partnerships between businesses and schools that facilitate effective job training.

With the passage of WIOA, seven *Manufacturing Jobs for America* proposals will have become law since the initiative's launch in October 2013. In addition to the five provisions included in WIOA, two provisions — to clarify conflicting guidance for small businesses under federal contracts and make the valuable R&D tax credit more accessible to small businesses — have been enacted. An additional five bills have passed the Senate Finance and Commerce committees and are awaiting consideration by the full Senate.

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