Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 4, 2014

The Honorable Jack Kingston
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services and Education
2358 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services and Education
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Kingston and Ranking Member DeLauro:

We are writing to respectfully request that you include $1.131 billion in funding for the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins) in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill. While we understand that the committee is faced with difficult choices to ensure fiscal responsibility, we urge you to avoid any reductions to Perkins, which would have adverse effects on millions of career and technical education students across the United States, as well as on the business community, which relies upon these programs for a skilled workforce.

In the Omnibus Appropriations Act passed in January, Perkins was funded $1.125 billion, an increase of $52 million from the previous fiscal year. We applaud this modest increase and urge the committee to continue making investments in workforce and career development programs. Any reduction to Perkins funding will equate to a decrease in job opportunities for young workers and adults looking to reenter the workforce. The importance of Perkins has been recognized by the Committee on Education and the Workforce by expressly prohibiting states from consolidating Perkins funding through the House-passed SKILLS Act, H.R 803, Section 140 (4)(A). We are hopeful the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Subcommittee on Appropriations will follow suit and continue their bipartisan commitment to Perkins.

As Career & Technical Education (CTE) continues to evolve in order to ensure that workers are prepared to hold jobs in high-wage, high-skill, and high-demand career fields like engineering, information technology and healthcare, it is now more important than ever that we do not undo past successes. Funding for Perkins provides high school students transferable skills that allow them to be "college- and career-ready," and addresses the skills gap by providing the retraining adults need to access the jobs that are available in today's market.

CTE works to ensure that students have the academic, technical and employability skills necessary for true career readiness—and Perkins funding is key to their continued success. Therefore, we urge you to fund the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act at $1.131 billion in FY2015.

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Sincerely,

Glenn 'GT' Thompson

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