

Apprenticeship Hubs Across America Act of 2021

Senators Coons, Young, Moran, Brown || Representatives Norcross, McKinley

Background:

- **Registered apprenticeships can help Americans displaced by COVID-19.** More than [10 million](#) Americans are unemployed due to COVID-19. Apprenticeships can re-skill workers and help people re-enter the job market.
- **Apprenticeships are an alternative to or complement to 4-year degrees.** [Registered apprenticeships](#) provide employment with structured on-the-job training, little to no student debt, competitive wages, industry-recognized credentials, and access to jobs.
- **Apprentices have high-earning careers.** The average wage for a fully-proficient worker who completes an apprenticeship is \$50,000 annually. Apprentices who complete their program earn approximately [\\$300,000 more](#) during their career than non-apprenticeship workers.
- **Employers report they are struggling to fill jobs due to skills gaps.** [Skills gaps exist](#) in a variety of occupations across a range of sectors. Apprenticeships could help fill those jobs.
- **Not enough registered apprenticeship programs exist in high-growth job sectors.** For example, the health care industry is seeing the [highest rates of job growth](#) in the U.S. While apprenticeships in the health care sector have seen great success in the UK and are growing in the U.S. as well, in 2019 there were only [6,958 active apprentices](#) in this sector.
- **Standing up new apprenticeships is complicated.** A major barrier to expanding registered apprenticeships in high-growth job sectors is employers' lack of familiarity with the process to set up and manage registered apprenticeship programs.
- **Apprenticeship Hubs can help expand registered apprenticeships.** Apprenticeship Hubs, also known as workforce intermediaries, are organizations that help ease the process for employers in developing and delivering new registered apprenticeship programs. They serve as a catalyzing force for expanding registered apprenticeships to high-growth job sectors.

The Apprenticeship Hubs Across America Act of 2021:

- **Establishes a new initiative at the Department of Labor to grow and expand highly successful Apprenticeship Hubs.** These organizations would participate in activities such as:
 - working with employers to design the apprenticeship curriculum and navigate the registration process for the registered apprenticeships;
 - marketing apprenticeships to students, counselors, administrators, or parents; and
 - providing guidance to and mentorship of apprentices during their apprenticeships to ensure retention and completion.
- **Promotes a national network of Apprenticeship Hubs.** The bill instructs the Department of Labor to conduct national workshops on how to create Apprenticeship Hubs and disseminate best practices on the effective development and implementation of registered apprenticeship programs through Hubs.
- **Evaluation.** The bill instructs the Department of Labor to conduct evaluations of the Hubs and use the results to determine whether to renew grants for the organizations.

The Apprenticeship Hubs Across America Act of 2021 is endorsed by: the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), North America's Building Trades Unions (NABTU), Jobs for the Future, Third Way, New America, the Chamber of Commerce for Greater Philadelphia, Small Business Majority, and Delaware Pathways.

What people are saying about the Apprenticeship Hubs Across America Act of 2021

“Over the past two centuries, we established free primary and secondary education and public two- and four-year colleges in every state,” said **Gabe Horwitz, Senior Vice President of the Economic Program at Third Way**. “Now, we must add the missing piece, making apprenticeships a ubiquitous part of our educational system. Senator Coons’ legislation takes an essential first step to making that a reality. This legislation is critical to fostering an inclusive economic recovery from COVID-19, which has devastated our economy and left millions of Americans out of work. Apprenticeships can play a key role in helping people regain their footing in the job market.”

“JFF's Center for Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning applauds this bipartisan effort to encourage and support the growth of apprenticeship intermediaries,” said **Eric Seleznow, Senior Advisor, Jobs For the Future (JFF)**. Intermediaries play a critical role in organizing and expanding high quality apprenticeship programs that help workers obtain the skills to succeed while helping businesses train their next generation of workers. There is an emergence of new intermediaries including community colleges, workforce boards, private firms, community-based organizations, and industry associations, among others, that make it easier for employers to create high quality registered apprenticeship programs. This bill will support these on-going efforts to expand the proven practice of apprenticeships for both adults and youth.”

“The ongoing impact of COVID-19 is making the important work of creating clear pathways to good jobs more urgent, complex and expansive in scale,” said **Brent Parton, Deputy Director for the Center on Education & Labor at New America**. “Apprenticeship is a proven model that offers a combination of paid, on-the-job training, and debt-free postsecondary credentials connected to good jobs. We need to invest in our national infrastructure to extend the guarantees of apprenticeship to more students and workers in more - sectors, such as health care, information technology, advanced manufacturing, and education. The Apprenticeship Hubs Across America Act addresses this critical need by making essential investments in intermediaries that make it easier for more employers to start apprenticeship programs, and expand these opportunities to more Americans.”

“Through our Combined WIOA and Perkins State Plan, Delaware has made tremendous strides in creating a career pathways system that is predicated on learner voice and employer needs,” said **Luke Rhine, Director of Career & Technical Education and STEM Initiatives at Delaware Department of Education**. “The Apprenticeship Hubs Across America Act of 2021 will help to expand apprenticeship as part of a system of higher education that values stackable industry credentials and connected degree models. We applaud Senator Coons and his colleagues for their work and their desire to develop new opportunities for employers to connect with education and training institutions.”