

August 12, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader McCarthy, and Leader Schumer,

As you continue to work towards legislation to assist in the response and recovery from the pandemic, we appreciate your focus on helping Americans get back to work. We urge you to include support for workforce development that furthers digital skills in future COVID-19 legislative packages.

The current public health and economic crisis has not only left millions of Americans unemployed, it is also challenging businesses large and small to adapt. The rapid transformation to formats to allow for social distancing may be here to stay in many industries. Businesses that were already looking to new technology before the pandemic are seeing an even greater need for solutions that can improve resiliency moving forward. Whether transitioning employees to remote work or accelerating the use of new technology, these new ways of doing business require reliance on a broad range of technology tools including hardware, software, cybersecurity, online collaboration and customer relationship management tools, platforms, and data storage.

Government and industry can and should do more to ensure the workforce has the digital literacy to fully leverage these technologies. Displaced workers and employees alike need new skills to thrive in our rapidly changing economy. Investing in opportunities for reskilling and upskilling to meet with the needs of a reshaped job market is critical for economic recovery and growth. And making digital skills training accessible to all, especially minority communities that have been hit hardest by the pandemic, is essential for delivering on a more equitable economic recovery. Workers with tech experience were in high demand before the pandemic and with the increasing reliance on digital tools, these skills will only become an even greater necessity for those in the workforce and job seekers.

As you craft legislative responses to COVID-19, we urge you to include investments that further the following goals for workforce training:

- Providing additional resources for training and reskilling workers who have lost their jobs due to the pandemic to help them gain digital and other job-based skills in growth industries, positioning them to rapidly reenter the workforce with higher earning potential as businesses begin to rehire again,
- Strengthening partnerships and tax incentives for industry, educators, and non-profit organizations to target training toward in-demand digital and other job-based skills as well as roles that meet business needs, and,
- Investing in quality short-term training— including online training to allow for social distancing—in key digital and emerging skills.

Investing in digital skills that further workforce readiness is essential for spurring a much-needed economic recovery. Together, the government and the private sector can meet today's challenges and ensure we have a workforce ready for the future. Thank you for your attention to these critical issues.

Sincerely,

Information Technology Industry Council (ITI)
Business Leaders United
AMPED (Advanced Manufacturing Practices and Educational Development)
Alliance for Digital Innovation
American Mold Builders Association
Associated General Contractors (AGC)
Association of Woodworking and Furnishing Suppliers
BSA | The Software Alliance
Bay Area Council
Computing Technology Industry Association
Greater Spokane, Inc.
Indy Chamber
Marine Retailers Association of the Americas
MA Business Roundtable
Metro Atlanta Chamber
Multicultural Media, Telecom, and Internet Council (MMTC)
Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce
National Tooling and Machining Association
North American Die Casting Association
Precision Machine Products Association
Precision Metalforming Association
Society for Maintenance and Reliability Professionals
The New England Council