

NCWGE NATIONAL COALITION FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS IN EDUCATION

August 21, 2006

The Honorable Buck McKeon
Chairman
Education and the Workforce Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC
20515

The Honorable George Miller
Ranking Member
Education and the Workforce Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC
20515

The Honorable Michael Enzi
Chairman Health, Education Labor and Pensions
Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Edward Kennedy
Ranking Member
Health, Education Labor and Pensions Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Members of Congress:

On behalf of the NCWGE Vocational Education and Workforce Training Task Force, a nonprofit coalition dedicated to improving educational opportunities for girls and women, we write to thank you for your efforts to reauthorize and strengthen gender equity provisions in the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. Strong gender equity provisions are critical to ensuring that the career and technical education system is able to prepare women and girls – including single mothers, displaced homemakers and former welfare recipients – for high skill, high wage and nontraditional careers that lead to economic self-sufficiency. Participation and achievement in career and technical education must not be limited by gender segregation, harassment, or other barriers.

We are particularly pleased with your efforts to close the gap between local plans and local use of funds by requiring local recipients of Perkins dollars to use funds for activities that prepare special populations for high skill, high wage or high demand occupations that will lead to self sufficiency. In recent years, services to displaced homemakers, single parents and nontraditional students have substantially decreased. This new provision will help to reverse this trend and increase the availability of career and technical education programs that address the unique needs of these populations.

We applaud the new requirement that State and local recipients must disaggregate performance data and quantify disparities in performance between subgroups of students and their peers. This new provision is an excellent tool to help States and locals better understand student performance and develop and improve programs to increase the performance of certain types of students, such as special populations.

We are also pleased that the new legislation clarifies State and local flexibility to determine whether Perkins funds are spent directly on supportive services. Supportive services are critical to ensuring the full participation of women and girls in career and technical education.

We are happy to see that the law and report language incorporates a new focus on self-sufficiency; this language will allow states and localities the opportunity to meet local

programming and community needs while leading their students toward the goal of economic independence. We hope to see this concept further incorporated into the career and technical education system in the future and look forward to continuing to work with you on this issue.

Again, thank you for your efforts to strengthen the career and technical education system for women and girls. For a list of the over 50 member organizations of NCWGE, please visit our website at www.ncwge.org. Should you have any questions about this letter, please contact Jill Miller, CEO of Women Work! and Chair of NCWGE's Vocational Education and Workforce Training Task Force, at (202)467-6346.

Sincerely,



Lisa M. Maatz
NCWGE Chair



Jocelyn Samuels
NCWGE Vice-Chair



Jill Miller
Chair, Vocational
Education and
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Task Force