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July 6, 2016

The Honorable John Kline
Chairman
Education and the Workforce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Robert C. “Bobby” Scott
Ranking Member
Education and the Workforce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Our Mission
Working with and
Through our State
Associations, NSBA
Advocates for Equity and
Excellence in
Public Education
through School Board
Leadership

Office of Advocacy

**Re: Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act
(H.R. 5587)**

Miranda A. Beard
President

Dear Chairman Kline and Ranking Member Scott:

Thomas J. Gentzel
Executive Director

The National School Boards Association (NSBA), representing more than 90,000 local school board members across the nation, working with and through our state associations, applauds the bipartisan work of your Committee to modernize the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (CTE). The “Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act” (H.R. 5587) reflects the concerted effort among our school districts, business and industry, and institutions of higher education to ensure that our students are prepared to succeed in the workforce.

Lucy Gettman
Deputy Associate Executive
Director

H.R. 5587 includes measures to help our school districts and states strengthen both the academic and technical skills of our students, particularly with the combination of core academic subjects and integrated career pathways. As many of our school districts work to expand partnerships to offer our students a well-rounded curriculum that addresses both college and career readiness, the need to modernize CTE as an integral part of the curriculum is a priority. The bill’s focus on sustainable relationships among education, businesses, and other community stakeholders, including local industry or sector partnerships for continuous alignment of programs of study with skills in demand in each state, region, or local economy will help address what a number of employers have cited as a “skills gap.”

The legislation consists of several specific provisions that our membership has deemed important, such as the incorporation of strong academic components, proactive career guidance and counseling, dual enrollment, work-based learning opportunities and credentialing. Each of these areas help our CTE programs strengthen skills in communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and innovation for students.

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NSBA's Center for Public Education has conducted research on career and technical education in its series titled "[The Path Least Taken: Preparing Non-College Goers for Success](#)," in which findings show that advanced courses with an occupational focus make a difference in student outcomes. The synopsis of this research series is that, obtaining "high credentials" - meaning a mix of academic knowledge and job specific, or technical skills, developed in high school plus a professional certificate or license - is key to career readiness for our students.

NSBA thanks the Committee for its work to strengthen the capacity and performance of our local career and technical education programs, as well your leadership to prioritize H.R. 5587 during the 114th Congress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas J. Gentzel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'T'.

Thomas J. Gentzel
Executive Director