

The Career and Technical Education Opportunity Act

The Career and Technical Education Opportunity Act (S.2795) is legislation introduced by Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) that opens the doors of opportunity for career and technical education (CTE) students and supplies regional economies with a highly skilled workforce.

All Career and Technical Education (CTE) Students Should be Able to Access Federal Student Aid

- Career and Technical Education prepares students for a wide range of careers with industry-recognized credentials, postsecondary certificates and degrees.
- CTE is one of the most effective vehicles for responding quickly to labor market changes and the workforce readiness needs of business and industry.
- Currently, students in some short-term CTE programs cannot access federal student aid to help them advance their careers.

Federal Investments Should Support Ready to Work Education

- The *CTE Opportunity Act* simply allows CTE students enrolled in short-term programs that lead to industry-recognized credentials to qualify for federal Title IV student loans.
- Students enrolled in programs with at least 250 clock hours offered over a minimum of 5 weeks of instruction would be able to access federal student aid including Title IV loans.
- Title IV loans often have better interest rates, stronger consumer protections, a range of income-based repayment options and other features that make them more desirable than private loans for students, families and CTE programs alike.

Support for the *CTE Opportunity Act*

The *CTE Opportunity Act* is co-sponsored by Senator Tim Kaine (D-VA).

Additional support includes the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) and the Wisconsin Technical College System.

“The CTE Opportunity Act will help students access federal loans to complete certificate and other short-term programs, making it more feasible for working adults and other non-traditional students to return to school and improve their skills.

The limited financial resources of WTCS students means that the costs of earning credentials can be a major barrier.

Therefore, any federal effort to expand financial aid availability (both grants and loans) for WTCS students will help improve Wisconsin’s economy.”

Morna K. Foy - President, Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS)

“The CTE Opportunity Act showcases the commitment that ACTE’s partners in the Senate CTE Caucus have to America’s CTE students, and we appreciate their efforts on this important initiative. By giving postsecondary CTE students pursuing shorter-term programs equal access to crucial federal aid programs, this bill will ensure more students have the resources they need to obtain education and training for in-demand careers.”

LeAnn Wilson - Executive Director, Association for Career and Technical Education

“This legislation is a promising step towards ensuring equitable access to federal financial aid programs for postsecondary Career Technical Education students. As our nation works to educate and train students of today for the jobs of tomorrow, it is critical that we afford them the necessary resources to complete education and training programs that are most demanded by employers.”

Kimberly Green - Executive Director, National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium (NASDCTE)