

April 26, 2021

Representative Ronald Mariano, Speaker
Massachusetts House of Representatives
State House, Room 356
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Aaron Michlewitz, Chair
House Committee on Ways and Means
State House, Room 243
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Speaker Mariano and Chairman Michlewitz,

The [Massachusetts Business Coalition on Skills](#) (MBCS) appreciates your continued efforts to prepare an FY 2022 budget that prioritizes economic recovery and invests in workforce skills development. The MBCS is a coalition of 25 diverse business organizations from across the state that advocates for equitable skills development policies so our current and future workforce can meet employers' needs. As debate begins on H.4000, the MBCS supports the following three amendments that expand access to innovative education and training opportunities.

Career Technical Institutes – Amendment #384 (Representative Cutler)

Amendment #384 increases the funding for the Career Technical Institutes (CTI) line-item (7002-1091) from the proposed \$4M to \$15.4M. The MBCS supports the increased funding for CTI because it enables the state to train a projected 20,000 new workers in skilled trades over the next four years. CTI has the potential to increase the number of skilled workers ready to enter stable career tracks in a variety of trades.

Early College – Amendments #426 and #428 (Representatives Roy, Peisch, Rogers, and Lipper-Garabedian)

Amendment #426 and Amendment #428 both increase funding for early college programs to meet growing student demand. Amendment #426 increases funding for the Department of Higher Education's dual enrollment grant and subsidies line-item (7066-0019) by \$3.4M, from \$4M to \$7.4M. Amendment #428 earmarks \$3.4M out of the proposed \$130M in funding from the state scholarship fund line-item (7070-0065) to reimburse higher education course credit costs for early college programs.

The MBCS supports both approaches because this investment in early college will provide almost 6,000 high school students the ability to earn 1,500 full-time college years of credit. Further, early college promotes education equity for all students by enabling high schoolers to enroll in college courses at no cost to the student. Due to the pandemic, there has been a decline in students of color enrolling in college, and early college serves as an effective pathway to a college degree and employment.

Thank you for your consideration. The Coalition looks forward to being a resource to you as you finalize the FY 2022 budget and continue to prioritize skills development and attainment.

Massachusetts Business Coalition on Skills

- 1Berkshire
- Amplify Latinx
- Bedford Area Chamber
- Black Economic Council of Massachusetts
- Blackstone Valley Chamber
- Cape Cod Chamber
- Greater Boston Chamber
- Kendall Square Association
- MassTLC
- Massachusetts Association of Insurance Agents
- Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education
- Massachusetts Business Roundtable
- Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation
- Nashoba Valley Chamber
- Neponset River Regional Chamber
- Newton-Needham Regional Chamber
- North Central Massachusetts Chamber
- North Shore Chamber
- One SouthCoast Chamber
- Quincy Chamber
- Retailers Association of Massachusetts
- Somerville Chamber
- Springfield Regional Chamber
- Western Massachusetts Economic Development Council
- Worcester Regional Chamber