

June 20, 2023

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

Senator Michael Rodrigues, Chair
 Senate Committee on Ways and Means
 State House, Room 212
 Boston, MA 02133

Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante, Vice Chair
 House Committee on Ways and Means
 State House, Room 238
 Boston, MA 02133

Senator Cindy Friedman, Vice Chair
 Senate Committee on Ways and Means
 State House, Room 313
 Boston, MA 02133

Representative Todd Smola, Ranking Minority
 House Committee on Ways and Means
 State House, Room 124
 Boston, MA 02133

Senator Patrick O'Connor, Ranking Minority
 Senate Committee on Ways and Means
 State House, Room 419
 Boston MA 02133

Dear FY24 Conference Committee Members,

The [Massachusetts Business Coalition on Skills](#) (MBCS), a coalition of 27 diverse business organizations that support strengthening workforce skills development programs and policies, appreciates the Legislature’s prioritization of reskilling our workforce of today and tomorrow in the FY 2024 budget. The MBCS is encouraged to see significant investments in skills development, which includes \$37,384,105 in proposed funding for line items that will create work-based learning opportunities, support essential skills development, and enhance Career Vocational/Technical Education (CVTE). The coalition urges the Conference Committee to advance bold investments for workforce development.

Experiential Learning

Employers embrace experiential learning models because they are proven ways to strengthen both essential and job-specific skills. Models like learn to earn and apprenticeships benefit employees who develop skills in a real work environment while earning a paycheck to ensure economic stability while training for labor market relevant careers. Employers also benefit because they can train employees with the specific skills for their industry or job needs. School-to-career connecting activities are public-private partnerships that provide similar on-the-job learning opportunities for students. The coalition urges the Conference Committee to adopt the House funding level of \$4,979,286 for Registered Apprenticeship Expansion (7003-0151) and adopt the House funding level of \$9,000,000 for School-to-Career Connecting Activities (7027-0019).

Line Item	Line Item Description	FY 2024
7003-0151	Registered Apprenticeship Expansion	\$4,979,286
7027-0019	School-to-Career Connecting Activities	\$9,000,000

Young Adult Career Pathways

The YouthBuild program’s track record of success in helping out-of-school young adults achieve a high school diploma and the necessary credentials to start a career in construction supports both our most vulnerable youth and a thriving talent pipeline for the construction industry. It is particularly important to support this pipeline development with the need for more housing to be built in the coming years to address the Commonwealth’s housing shortage. The coalition supports funding this effort to create upwardly mobile opportunities for the Commonwealth’s young people and urges the Conference Committee to adopt the Senate funding level of \$3,000,000 for YouthBuild Grants (7061-9626).

Line Item	Line Item Description	FY 2024
7061-9626	YouthBuild Grants	\$3,000,000

Support our Career Technical Institutes

Increasing funding for Career Technical Institutes will extend additional CVTE opportunities to adult learners by building out industry recognized credentialing pathways in skilled, technical, and trade fields. This benefits both program participants and employers who are seeking talent amid a shortage of workers. The coalition urges the Senate to provide level-funding with the House for Career Technical Institutes. The Coalition urges the Conference Committee to adopt the House funding level of \$20,404,819 for Career Technical Institutes (7002-1091).

Line Item	Line Item Description	FY 2024
7002-1091	Career Technical Institutes	\$20,404,819

Thank you for prioritizing the workforce and employers of today and tomorrow. The Coalition looks forward to being a resource as the Legislature continues to prioritize skills development and attainment.

Massachusetts Business Coalition on Skills

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1Berkshire Amplify Latinx Bedford Area Chamber Black Economic Council of Massachusetts Blackstone Valley Chamber Cape Cod Chamber Charles River Regional Chamber Greater Boston Chamber Kendall Square Association Massachusetts Technology Leadership Council (MassTLC) Massachusetts Association of Insurance Agents Massachusetts Business Roundtable Massachusetts State Automobile Dealers Association | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation Nashoba Valley Chamber Neponset River 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 |
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