



March 12, 2013

National Taxpayers Union Vote Alert

NTU urges all Representatives to vote “YES” on H.R. 803, the “Supporting Knowledge and Investing in Lifelong Skills (SKILLS) Act.” This legislation streamlines the bloated workforce development system and creates a single job-training-to-private-sector-employment pipeline in the Workforce Investment Fund.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that at the same time 12 million Americans are unemployed, 3.6 million jobs stand open, even as the federal government spends approximately \$18 billion annually on more than 50 job training programs. When faced with such stark economic numbers and sky-high debt, it’s clear Washington must undertake a serious and immediate overhaul to save taxpayers money and meet the needs of a changing labor market.

H.R. 803 tackles this task through a series of systemic reforms to what the President has called a “maze of confusing training programs.” It does so by eliminating and streamlining 35 ineffective, duplicative federal programs, including 27 identified by the Government Accountability Office, that are spread across 9 agencies. The legislation emulates other federal aid successes by increasing block grants, empowering governors to consolidate additional job training programs, and increasing authority at the local level, where private employers can help ensure workforce training is meeting the area’s needs.

Ideally, Washington should be getting out of the job training business. However, H.R. 803 is an important first step in the right direction. Less government paired with increased accountability is a responsible solution to what is an increasingly expensive and unwieldy problem.

Roll call votes on H.R. 803 will be included in our annual Rating of Congress and a “YES” vote will be considered the pro- taxpayer position.

If you have any questions, please contact NTU Federal Affairs Manager Nan Swift at (703) 683-5700
