

March 31, 2016 – VOLUME 13, ISSUE 3

## Putting Perkins to Work in Washington, Growing Talent Nationwide

*How to align federal education and workforce policies to build the technical skills of the future.*

American businesses face a universal problem. Regardless of the markets they serve or materials they move, the companies that form the backbone of U.S. industry are struggling to find technically skilled workers. Whenever owners or executives list their biggest challenges, finding the right people will always tops the list.

Where are they?

### The Bachelor's Degree Bind

For years, the perceived pathway to personal success in the United States has been almost exclusively through four-year bachelor's degrees. Stories celebrating first generations of Americans to attend college or sensationalizing the undergraduate experience often drive high school graduates to enter a university dorm instead of an industry workshop.

According to U.S. Department of Education Data, the number of bachelor's degrees awarded on a yearly basis more than doubled between 1970 and 2012. For higher-level credentials the increase was more dramatic: The number of masters and doctoral degrees awarded each year grew by more than 200 percent over the same period.

Students have taken "stay in school" to heart.

The result: a type of academic inflation that overvalues advanced credentials. As students sought higher levels of education, employers began to demand degrees even for jobs that may not have required them. This new incentive from the labor market created continued demand for education and the problem spun out of control. While students have responded by spending more years in the protected halls of academic institutions, industry is waking up to the problems created by over-emphasis on college-track learning. The skills gap created by the absence of qualified technical workers has become a constant challenge for American businesses.

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### **ACPPA Event Reminders**

#### **Mid-Year Board of Direction Meeting\***

June 20, 2016

Sheraton Grand – Chicago, Illinois

*\*Meeting closed to public.*

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#### **ASCE Pipelines Conference Reception**

July 16, 2016

Kansas City, Missouri

Stay tuned to [ACPPA.org](http://ACPPA.org) for details.

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Many employers plan to grow businesses and add workers over the coming years. According to an annual report co-published by Deloitte and the Manufacturing Institute, manufacturing companies alone expect to create more than three million jobs over the next decade. However, growth aspirations weaken in the face of qualified personnel; nearly two thirds of those jobs will go unfilled unless the gap in needed technical skills is closed.

The value of technical skills is beginning to resonate. In 2015, the *Wall Street Journal* chronicled the early career of a Texas man who chose technical training over university after graduating high school in 2010. With a two-year welding degree in hand, the 24 year old earned \$140,000 in 2014. His mother, a retired biology lecturer with a doctoral degree, acknowledged in an interview for the *Journal* that four years of college was not a universal necessity.

### *The New American Dream*

For Americans, the pathway to high-growth, high-demand careers is no longer exclusively through four-year bachelor's degrees. Through career and technical education (CTE) programs and the expansion of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) initiatives beyond traditional academic disciplines, academic institutions and businesses can create robust talent pipelines to support the core construction, manufacturing and industrial jobs that are the foundation of the economy.

The STEM example is powerful. The interest in supporting education in these fields has been gathering momentum for years, but the national understanding of what "STEM" really represents is misaligned with reality. In 2014, the Brookings Institution reported that half of the 26 million STEM jobs in the United States are available to workers without a four year degree. Despite this, the report noted: "Policymakers have mainly focused on supporting workers with at least a bachelor's degree, overlooking a strong potential workforce of those with less education but substantial STEM skills."

In reality, the "middle skill" jobs captured by Brookings' study – those that require training beyond high school but not a bachelor's degree – will power the economy for the foreseeable future. The Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce reported in 2013 that nearly one third of all jobs created by 2020 will require some secondary skills training but not a four year degree. That's more than 16 million jobs before the end of the decade.

### *Think Nationally, Apply Locally*

Washington is slowly coming around to this new workforce reality. Last year, the White House unveiled a proposal to make two years of community college free for many students. The announcement included a proposal for a new American Technical Training Fund to connect skills development to the needs of employers. Though the proposal drew little attention, it represented a renewed focus from the White House on employer need as the policy foundation for building the next generation of American workers.

Congress has already laid that foundation. In 2014, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) became law. The first legislative reform of the public workforce system in 15 years, WIOA provides resources to help prepare workers for available jobs by responding to the needs of employers. Development programs are administered by state-level workforce boards that implement programs best

suited to the local employment market. (To learn more about how these initiatives are taking shape and how to comment on the government's proposals, visit [www.doleta.gov/wioa](http://www.doleta.gov/wioa).)



Even in a contentious, “do nothing” Congress, a large bipartisan majority was able to move on WIOA to the president's desk. As Washington gets wrapped up in presidential politics and lawmakers seek bills that could actually move, the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins) sits long-overdue for reauthorization. Perkins funds do not provide direct assistance to individuals, but instead form grants to states for the development and implementation of CTE programs at the secondary and postsecondary levels. The primary mechanism for federal investment in CTE, Perkins has not had a full reauthorization in nearly a decade.

Responsive federal workforce policy should provide states and communities with the tools necessary to stimulate the growth of skills that put students into jobs. Congress must prioritize technical education and utilize Perkins as a tool to further empower states to support needed skills. To do that, Congress can follow its own blueprint and align the board structures, accountability measures and industry sector partnerships codified in WIOA with the programmatic structure of Perkins.

By streamlining these requirements, lawmakers can recognize the importance of connecting workforce and education policy for technical career development. It can also provide industry with a great opportunity to get involved with WIOA's state-level workforce investment boards to leverage resources of both the Departments of Labor and Education in order to nurture the talent needed for businesses to flourish.

While ACPPA works to align federal workforce policies in Washington, members should learn more about the workforce investment structures in each state. To find key contacts and learn about employment and training resources – and how to engage them – visit [www.servicelocator.org/contactspartners](http://www.servicelocator.org/contactspartners).

### **Senators Introduce PAB Companion Bill**

On Feb. 29, Sens. Robert Menendez (D-N.J.) and Mike Crapo (R-Idaho) introduced [the Sustainable Water Infrastructure Investment Act](#) (S. 2606). The ACPPA-supported proposal, which lifts the cap on private activity bonds (PABs) for water and wastewater infrastructure projects, is identical to House legislation ([H.R.499](#)), sponsored by Reps. Jimmy Duncan (R-Ten.) and Bill Pascrell (R-N.J.)

According to estimates, removing the cap on PABs could generate as much as \$5 billion annually in private capital for water infrastructure projects. With lawmakers reducing funding for the Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) programs by more than 30 percent since 2010, private investment is more important than ever to make up a growing gap between needs and funding. Furthermore, investment resulting from PABs is free from many of the restrictions imposed on federal funding (e.g., Buy America mandates, etc.).

In a statement, outlining the legislation, Sen. Menendez said, “Flint has taught us all that ignoring our aging water infrastructure has dire consequences. We’ve under-invested in our infrastructure, certainly we’ve underinvested in water systems, and now we’re paying the price. These systems are old and badly

degraded. Many of them are waiting to fail, and they need to be fixed. We can't sit back, do nothing, and fail to address the public health dangers of an aging infrastructure.”

Lawmakers are attempting to insert the bill into a broader package moving through the House and Senate, such as a Flint assistance package, the Water Resources & Development Act authorization, or another tax or infrastructure bill.

## **Responsible Infrastructure Choices take Political Courage**

*By U.S. Representative Lou Barletta, Pa.-11*

When I travel the roads and cross the bridges in my Pennsylvania district, I am constantly reminded of the dire needs of our transportation infrastructure. Improvements are being made, and there have been important changes at the state and federal level, but there is still a great deal more that Congress should be doing. In my position on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, I have been vocal in my support of forward-looking ideas to help rebuild our nation's crumbling transportation system.

As a product of a family-owned road construction business, I know well the pressures such small companies face. Builders and contractors cannot make decisions about hiring and purchasing equipment in the absence of a long-term funding plan, and that begins with the federal Highway Bill. For too many years, Congress had used short-term patches to prevent construction and maintenance funding from running out, but I had grown weary of that tactic and told House leaders that they could not count on my support any longer. After much debate, I ultimately supported the \$305 billion, five-year plan we passed in December. The length of the bill is a marked improvement, but I saw it as only a first step, and a missed opportunity for achieving a long-term funding mechanism we can count on.



Rep. Barletta is in his third term representing Pennsylvania's 11th congressional district. He serves on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, where he chairs the Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management Subcommittee. He's also a member of the House Homeland Security Committee and the House Education and the Workforce Committee.

Unfortunately, during consideration of the Highway bill, House members were not allowed to offer amendments that created new approaches to funding. That was irresponsible. Every year the Highway Trust Fund faces shortfalls. Without a sustainable, dependable user fee, the Highway Trust Fund will continue to rely on transfers of borrowed money from the Treasury. Throughout the many transfers to the Highway Trust Fund, we have used pension gimmicks, bank fees, and reduced federal employee benefits to pay for our roads and bridges.

Around the country, I have heard from people that they would be willing to pay a very small increase in the fuel price for road improvements, if they can actually see the progress being made. Because politicians in Washington wanted to be protected from making hard choices, those ideas were never debated – to the detriment of the debts we are cowardly leaving our children and grandchildren. The point is that we must be

willing to cast difficult votes of all kinds in order to ensure that our roads are safe for everyone who uses them and we don't leave the bill for a defunct infrastructure system to the next generation.

When it came to reauthorizing our aviation programs, I also took the long view with respect to funding the Airport Improvement Program (AIP), the infrastructure funding source which our local airports depend on for much-needed construction or upgrades. I proposed, and successfully added to the legislation, an increase in the AIP to restore funding to Fiscal Year 2011 levels – about \$3.5 billion – and increase the amount by two percent in each following year. This was the first time in many years that the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee members had to take a vote on raising funding levels for infrastructure. The amendment passed the Committee by an overwhelming vote of 47-12, proving that when Members of Congress are required to make hard choices they will stand for infrastructure investment.

In too many situations, new ideas are batted down with the excuse that, "It's not the way we've always done it." Coming from a private sector business background as I do, I believe that is about the lamest possible reason not to try a new approach.

*ACPPA thanks Rep. Barletta for sharing his insights. The views expressed in this article are the congressman's and do not necessarily reflect the positions of ACPPA.*

### **WOTUS Update: 6th Circuit Jurisdiction Boosts Administration's EPA Hopes**

After issuing a [nationwide stay against enforcement](#) last October, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6<sup>th</sup> Circuit has determined it has jurisdiction to review numerous challenges to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Army Corps of Engineers' controversial new rule broadly defining the scope of "the waters of the United States."

The [2-1 ruling](#) allows more than 31 separate lawsuits to be combined in federal court. The decision could aid the Obama administration's campaign to push stricter environmental regulations and upset the balance of state and federal responsibility in overseeing waterways.

The "WOTUS" rule, which was issued on in May of 2016 and became effective in August, significantly expanded the EPA's jurisdiction under the Clean Water Act (CWA) and has made enemies in Washington and across U.S. industry. In 2014, a collection of diverse industry groups opposed the agency's proposal to redefine "waters of the United States" for purposes of federal regulatory oversight. Unfortunately, the final rule failed to heed those public comments; it is virtually identical to the original proposal.

The EPA's continued regulatory overreach remains an issue for ACPPA, its industry allies and congressional lawmakers seeking to curtail the powers of the executive branch.

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# Pressure Pipe Post

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ACPPA's Monthly Source for Industry News

March 2016

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To keep members aware of the activities of government and standards organizations, we regularly sweep public databases and publications for the industry-specific terms indicated below. We then provide our members with links to documents identified in the search. Please note that in some cases the URLs may link to subscription-only databases. The purpose of this service is to identify emerging threats and trends as well as opportunities for collective action by ACPPA.

## **NEWS RESULTS**

### **Coal and Fly Ash**

#### **Coal Refuge Pile Brings Income To County Government**

03/30/2016 <http://okawvilletimes.com/articles/2016/03/30/news/doc56fbc7c4d642142903777.txt>

A rate of 30 cents a ton might not sound like a lot of money. When it is coal ash at a power plant, however, it adds up.

#### **Fly Ash Market is Expected to Grow at the CAGR of 7.3% During 2015-2022**

03/30/2016 [http://www.bloomberg.com/research/markets/news/article.asp?docKey=600-201603300431M2\\_EUPR\\_b01c000001b00191\\_3600-1](http://www.bloomberg.com/research/markets/news/article.asp?docKey=600-201603300431M2_EUPR_b01c000001b00191_3600-1)

According to a new market report published by Credence Research, "Fly Ash Market - Growth, Share, Opportunities, Competitive Analysis, and Forecast 2015 - 2022," the fly ash market was valued at US\$ 39.54 Bn in 2015, and is expected to reach US\$ 64.76 Bn by 2022, expanding at a CAGR of 7.3% from 2016 to 2022.

### **Pipes and Pipelines**

#### **Letter: Pipeline project warrants health risk assessments**

03/20/2016 <http://www.recordonline.com/opinion/20160320/letter-pipeline-project-warrants-health-risk-assessments>

We must protect our water. All reservoirs, streams and lakes are vulnerable ... so are watersheds, private and municipal wells. They are directly located near the proposed routes of the pipeline and laterals. Even a minor spill can contaminate the groundwater.

### **Considering Corrosion Allowances for High-Strength Steels**

03/21/2016 <https://pgjonline.com/2016/03/21/considering-corrosion-allowances-for-high-strength-steels/>

Due to great chemistry and metallurgical innovations of the steel industry, higher strength steels have made significant strides, in specified minimum yield strength (SMYS), wall thickness control, toughness and weight per foot.

### **Pipe Bursting Methods and Projects**

03/21/2016 [http://www.cleaner.com/editorial/2016/04/pipe\\_bursting\\_methods\\_and\\_projects6](http://www.cleaner.com/editorial/2016/04/pipe_bursting_methods_and_projects6)

Problem: In 2008, as part of its ongoing asset management plan, the City of Billings, Montana, designated a 520-linear-foot, 8-inch cast iron water main on 3rd Avenue North near 10th Street for replacement due to extensive deterioration.

### **Pipeline Safety Update**

03/28/2016 <http://www.natlawreview.com/article/march-28-2016-pipeline-safety-update>

On March 17, 2016, the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) released an advance copy of the long-awaited notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) that would extensively modify the federal pipeline safety regulations applicable to gas transmission and gathering pipelines.

### **Water and Sewer Systems**

#### **State commission would help guide infrastructure spending**

03/10/2016 <http://michiganradio.org/post/state-commission-would-help-guide-infrastucture-spending>

A new commission would help decide how to spend \$165 million Gov. Rick Snyder has proposed for infrastructure fixes in Michigan.

#### **Hampton Roads Sanitation District announces utility work impact on Waterside Drive**

03/14/2016 [http://pilotonline.com/news/local/hampton-roads-sanitation-district-announces-utility-work-impact-on-waterside/article\\_c82eaf92-3f48-5971-b6c9-c7ace72a193a.html](http://pilotonline.com/news/local/hampton-roads-sanitation-district-announces-utility-work-impact-on-waterside/article_c82eaf92-3f48-5971-b6c9-c7ace72a193a.html)

The Hampton Roads Sanitation District has announced that Waterside Drive westbound between Saint Paul's Boulevard and Atlantic Street will be reduced to one lane due to utility replacement work starting Monday, March 14, through April.

#### **Cool, Clear...Right to Water**

03/22/2016 <http://americamagazine.org/content/dispatches/cool-clearright-water>

The government-administered water catastrophe in Flint, Mich., a public health emergency mal-engineered by a clumsy confluence of bad decision-making, lax oversight and ideological hard-headedness, may appear a singular crisis.

### **Cal Water Completes Main Replacement Project in King City**

03/25/2016 <http://www.noodles.com/viewNoodl/32780804/california-water-service-group/cal-water-completes-main-replacement-project-in-king-city#sthash.AS596mf3.dpuf>

California Water Service (Cal Water) has completed the replacement of more than 486 feet of aging water mains, addition of 13 new water services, and installation of one new fire hydrant in central King City to improve water supply reliability and strengthen fire-fighting capabilities for the local community.

### **One Perspective on Strategy to Improve Water Infrastructure**

03/25/2016 <http://wuum.com/post/one-perspective-strategy-improve-water-infrastructure>

Mention "lead" these days and Flint, Michigan and its contaminated water supply is probably the first thing that comes to mind. But the crisis spotlights issues facing much of the nation.

### **Will the White House Moonshot on Water Affect Lead Levels?**

03/28/2016 [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/greenbiz-group/whats-the-deal-with-lead- b\\_9547850.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/greenbiz-group/whats-the-deal-with-lead- b_9547850.html)

Lead in drinking water is in the news — I'll get to what that has to do with the White House shortly. It is currently estimated that the cost to replace lead-lined pipes in the U.S. is \$40 billion, according to a Global Water Intelligence report from last year.

### **Water district crews replace leaking pipe in Jamestown**

03/30/2016 <http://www.uniondemocrat.com/localnews/4172109-151/water-district-crews-replace-leaking-pipe-in-jamestown>

Tuolumne Utilities District maintenance and construction staff replaced a leaking water service pipe Tuesday in downtown Jamestown.

### **Pennsylvania American Water: Wilkes-Barre system to receive \$2.3M in upgrades**

03/30/2016 <https://timesleader.com/news/local/526782/pennsylvania-american-water-wilkes-barre-system-to-receive-2-3m-in-upgrades>

More than 14,000 feet of water main in Wilkes-Barre will be upgraded to improve reliability for customers, reduce service disruptions and increase water flows for firefighting, Pennsylvania American Water has announced.

## **REGULATORY RESULTS**

### **Pressure Pipe**

#### **Department of Commerce| Notice| Welded Stainless Pressure Pipe From India: Postponement of Preliminary Determination of Antidumping Duty Investigation**

03/03/2016 <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-03-03/pdf/2016-04719.pdf>

On October 20, 2015, the Department of Commerce initiated an antidumping duty investigation on welded stainless pressure pipe from India.

**International Trade Commission| Notice| Certain Seamless Carbon and Alloy Steel Standard, Line, and Pressure Pipe From China**

03/07/2016 <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-03-07/pdf/2016-04998.pdf>

On the basis of the record 1 developed in the subject five-year reviews, the United States International Trade Commission determines, pursuant to the Tariff Act of 1930, that revocation of the countervailing duty order and antidumping duty order on Certain Seamless Carbon and Alloy Steel Standard, Line, and Pressure Pipe from China would be likely to lead to continuation or recurrence of material injury to an industry in the United States within a reasonably foreseeable time.

**Water Infrastructure**

**The Executive Office of the President | Memorandum to the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies | Building National Capabilities for Long-Term Drought Resilience**

03/21/2016 <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2016-03-25/pdf/2016-06901.pdf>

Our Nation must sustain and expand efforts to reduce the vulnerability of communities to the impacts of drought. Every year, drought affects millions of Americans and poses a serious and growing threat to the security and economies of communities nationwide.

**LEGISLATIVE RESULTS**

**Coal Ash**

**H.R. 4827 | Rep. Henry Johnson [D-Ga.] | Coal Ash Landfill Safety Act**

03/22/2016 <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/4827?>

To require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to review regulations for municipal solid waste landfills to determine if such regulations are, with the respect to the disposal of coal combustion residuals in such landfills, protective of health and the environment, and for other purposes

**Water Infrastructure**

**S. 2606 | Sen. Robert Menendez [D-N.J.] | Sustainable Water Infrastructure Investment Act of 2016**

02/29/2016 <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/2606?>

To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that the volume cap for private activity bonds shall not apply to bonds for facilities for the furnishing of water and sewage facilities.

**Actionline**  
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**Water Supply**

**H.R. 4862 | Rep. Mark DeSaulnier [D-Calif.] | Sustainable Water Supplies Act**

03/23/2016 <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/4862?>

To determine the feasibility of additional agreements for long-term use of existing or expanded non-Federal storage and conveyance facilities to augment Federal water supply, ecosystem, and operational flexibility benefits in certain areas, and for other purposes.