



PROFESSIONAL
CERTIFICATION
COALITION

July 14, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Professional Certification Coalition Support for Skills Renewal Act

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader McCarthy, and Leader Schumer:

The Professional Certification Coalition (PCC) writes to express our strong support for S. 3779/H.R. 7032, the Skills Renewal Act, and encourages Congress to include the legislation, with amendments as described below, in the next round of COVID-19 relief legislation. The legislation would provide a tax credit to individuals whose employment has been impacted by the current pandemic to enable them to pursue training and certification opportunities to advance their careers or to qualify them for new job opportunities.

The PCC is a nonprofit association that addresses legislative initiatives affecting professional certification programs and those holding private certification credentials. Founded in 2018, the PCC has more than 100 organizational members, including non-governmental professional certification organizations, professional societies, and service providers. The PCC's members – which collectively represent or certify millions of professionals across the country – reflect a wide spectrum of professions, including healthcare, engineering, HR, financial services, and IT services, among many others.

The Skills Renewal Act aims to provide financial incentives to individuals who are seeking new training, skills, and professional recognition. In its current form, the bill would create a \$4,000 “skills training credit” that individuals could apply to cover the cost of professional training programs – including stackable credentials, certificate programs, apprenticeships, and traditional two- and four-year programs – that build skills in STEM fields and other designated “high-need” fields. The credit would be made available to anyone who lost their job as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and would offset the cost of training programs any time in 2020 or 2021.

The PCC supports the objectives of the legislation. As we have conveyed to the bill sponsors, the PCC believes those objectives can be more fully met by expanding permissible uses of the tax credit to cover not only training programs, but also costs associated with taking professional certification examinations that serve as recognized credentials for the skills and competencies gained through that

training. Specifically, we propose amending the legislation to ensure that the tax credit would apply to a broader range of expenses:

- *The bill should permit individuals to use the tax credit to cover expenses associated with a course or program of study that fulfills the prerequisites to qualify the individual to obtain a reputable professional certification or other postsecondary credential. As currently drafted, the tax credit would only cover expenses associated with: (1) training programs identified on workforce training program lists maintained by states under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act or (2) training programs in the computing and STEM fields that would be precertified by the U.S. Department of Labor under the bill. Our proposed amendments would allow the Secretary of Labor to precertify other training programs to prepare individuals to earn certifications or other recognized postsecondary credentials. Given the high levels of job disruptions and unemployment caused by the pandemic, individuals should be encouraged to retrain or enhance their credentials for any occupation in which there may be more openings, even if not deemed “high-need,” and the Secretary of Labor should be authorized to precertify those training programs.*
- *The bill should permit the tax credit to cover expenses associated with preparing for and taking an examination or other assessment that certification programs require to obtain a credential. The legislation, as introduced, covers only expenses associated with training programs, but not certification examinations or other assessments that may be prerequisites to obtaining (and, in some cases, maintaining) credentials that demonstrate to employers that the individual has the competencies and knowledge to meet established standards in the occupation. Our amendments would allow individuals to use the tax credit to offset both preparatory training expenses and the costs associated with taking an examination or assessment developed or administered by an organization widely recognized as providing reputable credentials in a particular occupation – which, most often, is a different and independent entity from the organizations offering training programs.*

With these amendments, the Skills Renewal Act would provide an important opportunity to people who have lost their jobs because of the COVID-19 pandemic and are eager to obtain a valuable credential that will help them to advance in their careers or make them marketable for a position in a new occupation. We urge Members of Congress and senators to cosponsor this important, bipartisan legislation and to include it as part of the next COVID-19 relief bill passed by Congress.

Many thanks for your consideration. Please feel free to contact Craig Saperstein, counsel to the PCC, at info@profcertcoalition.org or (202) 663-8000, if you would like to further information on the PCC’s support for the bill.

Signatories listed below carbon copy line

CC:

The Honorable Richard Neal
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Kevin Brady
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Charles Grassley
United States Senate

The Honorable Ron Wyden
United States Senate

The Honorable Bobby Scott
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Virginia Foxx
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
United States Senate

The Honorable Patty Murray
United States Senate

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
United States Senate

The Honorable Ben Sasse
United States Senate

The Honorable Cory Booker
United States Senate

The Honorable Tim Scott
United States Senate

The Honorable Derek Kilmer
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Susan Brooks
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Terri Sewell
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Glenn T. Thompson
United States House of Representatives

Signatories

ABRET Neurodiagnostic Credentialing & Accreditation (ABRET)

ABSA International: the Association for Biosafety and Biosecurity (ABSA)

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND)

Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation & Education Professionals (ACVREP)

American Association of Post-Acute Care Nurses (AAPACN)

American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN)

American Association of Neuromuscular & Electrodiagnostic Medicine (AANEM)

American Association of Professional Landmen

American Board for Certification in Orthotics, Prosthetics and Pedorthics (ABCOP)

American Board of Certification for Gastroenterology Nurses (ABCGN)

American Board of Neuroscience Nursing (ABNN)

American Board of Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine (ABPLM)

American Board of Wound Management (ABWM)

American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA)

American Medical Certification Association (AMCA)

American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC)

American Payroll Association (APA)

American Road & Transportation Builders Association Foundation (ARTBA)

American Society of Association Executives (ASAE)

American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)

American Society for Clinical Pathology of Board Certification

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)

American Traffic Safety Services Association (ATSSA)

American Translators Association (ATA)

American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)

APICS (formerly the American Production and Inventory Control Society)

Association for Financial Counseling & Planning Education (AFCPE)

Association for Financial Professionals (AFP)

Association of Surgical Technologists (AST)

Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB)

Building Industry Consulting Service International (BICSI)

Board of Certification of Nutrition Specialists (BCNS)

Board of Certification/Accreditation (BOC)

Board of Certified Safety Professionals (BCSP)

Board of Pharmacy Specialties (BPS)

Building Commissioning Certification Board (BCCB)

CCIM Institute (issues the Certified Commercial Investment Member designation)

CFA Institute

Certification Board for Music Therapists (CBMT)

Certification Board of Infection Control and Epidemiology (CBIC)

Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards (CFP)

Certified Fund Raising Executive International (CFRE)

Commercial Real Estate Certification Institute

Commission for Case Manager Certification (CCMC)

Commission on Nurse Certification (CNC)

Computing Technology Industry Association (CompTIA)

Community Association Institute (CAI)

Construction Management Association of America (CMAA)

Council of Engineering and Scientific Specialty Boards (CESB)

Dental Assisting National Board (DANB)

Design-Build Institute of America (DBIA)

Diving Equipment and Marketing Association (DEMA)

Entertainment Services and Technology Association (ESTA)

ETA International (ETA)

Events Industry Council (EIC)

Financial Planning Association (FPA)

Hearth, Patio, & Barbecue Education Foundation

Heuristic Solutions

Hospice and Palliative Credentialing Center (HPCC)

Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE)

Institute of Certified Management Accountants (ICMA)

Institute of Hazardous Materials Management (IHMM)

Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA)	National Board of Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT)
Inteleos (includes the American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonography (ARDMS) and the Alliance for Physician Certification & Advancement (APCA))	National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM)
Irrigation Association	National Certification Board for Diabetes Educators (NCBDE)
International Association of Healthcare Central Service Materiel Management (IAHCMM)	National Certification Corporation (NCC)
International Association of Lighting Designers (IALD)	National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA)
International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium (IC&RC)	National Commission for Health Education Credentialing
International Coach Federation (ICF)	National Council on Family Relations (NCFR)
International Foundation for Retirement Education (InfRE)	National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)
International Society of Automation (ISA)	National Restaurant Association (NRA)
Institute of Real Estate Management (IREM)	National Roofing Contractors Association (NRCA)
International Information System Security Certification Consortium (ISC ²)	National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE)
IT Certification Council (ITCC)	Nephrology Nursing Certification Commission
Laborers' International Union of North America Training & Education Fund (LIUNA)	Oncology Nursing Certification Corporation
Medical-Surgical Nursing Certification Board (MSNCB)	Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH)
National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc. (NALA)	Pediatric Nursing Certification Board (PNCB)
National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors (NAIFA)	Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB)
National Association of Personal Financial Advisors (NAPFA)	PSI Services
National Athletic Trainers' Association Board of Certification, Inc. (NATA)	Pearson Vue
National Board of Certification and Recertification for Nurse Anesthetists (NBCRNA)	QualityPro
National Board of Certification in Hearing Instrument Sciences (NBC-HIS)	School Nutrition Association (SNA)
National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA)	SeaCrest Consulting
	Security Industry Association
	Society of Broadcast Engineers (SBE)
	Specialty Pharmacy Certification Board (SPCB)
	Spray Polyurethane Foam Alliance (SPFA)
	Towing and Recovery Association of America, Inc. (TRA)