



June 29, 2021

The Honorable Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Chair
U.S. House Committee on Education and Labor
2328 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Virginia Foxx
Ranking Member
U.S. House Committee on Education and Labor
2462 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frederica S. Wilson
Chair
Higher Education Subcommittee
2445 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Gregory F. Murphy
Ranking Member
Higher Education Subcommittee
313 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairs Scott and Wilson & Ranking Members Foxx and Murphy,

On behalf of the nearly 150,000 IEEE members in the United States, represented by the IEEE-USA, I am writing to ask you to support H.R. 636, the PARTNERS Act.

Over half of the jobs in the United States do not require a college degree. In STEM fields 60% do not. Despite this, the U. S. has long neglected programs designed to prepare prospective employees to fill these jobs. While many good jobs don't require a college degree, they do require specialized skills; yet, the U.S. has de-emphasized non-college training programs over the past few decades. This is a strategic error. Professional and technical training programs have been a path into good paying careers for generations of American workers. They still can be, with proper support.

The PARTNERS Act supports this effort by encouraging employers and organizations to provide alternative educational opportunities for their employees within industry partnerships. Internships, apprentices, and at-work training programs are key to providing millions of Americans with high paying jobs in fields like cybersecurity, robotics, and computer programming. America needs these workers, and American workers need these jobs. The costs associated with this legislation will likely be offset by the increased economic benefits realized through an improved workforce, more profitable industries, and a more prosperous society. Encouraging companies to provide non-collegiate training programs opens the door for full participation in America's skill-based economy for American workers all across our country. The technology professionals of IEEE-USA strongly encourage you to support this bill.

Sincerely,

Katherine J. Duncan, PhD
President, IEEE-USA

