April 8, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Democratic Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson and Leader Jeffries:

The Skills First Coalition, a consortium of employers and innovative education providers advocating to advance policies that invest in and strengthen the alignment between education and skills training for in-demand jobs, is writing today to express our **strong support for the bipartisan H.R. 6655, A Stronger Workforce for America Act, and urges its swift passage.**

As a Coalition, we believe Congress must do more to recognize and equalize many non-traditional ways that workers and learners obtain in-demand skills and secure good paying jobs. We are encouraged H.R. 6655 takes significant steps toward these goals, including:

- Directing no less than 50% of funds toward workforce skills education, ensuring our workforce system focuses on its primary goal of providing learners with in-demand occupational skills needed to compete in today's labor market.
- Promoting employer-led learning models, better linking education to work.
- Incentivizing states to expand the adoption of skills-based hiring and learning that reward an individual's competencies, knowledge, and prior work experience.
- Increasing the cap on incumbent worker training, helping our current workforce to reskill and upskill so they can remain competitive.
- Including digital literacy as a foundational skill to better align with an ever-changing economy.

- Encouraging states to streamline access to the Eligible Training Provider List and offer reciprocity among each other to ensure more individuals access high-quality education providers.
- Promoting better access to centralized data tools, including state wage records and the National Directory of New Hires, to measure outcomes consistently, reliably, accurately, and in real-time.
- Allowing high-quality in-person, online, and hybrid learning models that individuals can access in a variety of flexible and innovative ways.

We commend the House Committee on Education and the Workforce for favorably reporting this bipartisan bill on December 12, 2023, and urge you to **vote YES** on the House floor. America's learners, workers, and employers deserve a workforce system that keeps pace with technological advancements demanded in the workplace and is accountable, flexible, and innovative in its delivery of high-quality learning.

Sincerely,

The Skills First Coalition
IBM Corporation
Cengage Group
American Trucking Associations
Autos Drive America
Chegg
CompTIA
HP Inc.
International Paper
LinkedIn
National University
Presidents Forum
Randstad
Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA)
Semiconductor Industry Association (SIA)
Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)
Western Governors University

cc: The Honorable Virginia Foxx, Chairwoman, House Committee on Education and the Workforce
The Honorable Bobby Scott, Ranking Member, House Committee on Education and the Workforce
Members of the U.S. House of Representatives