



COMMITTEE ON  
EDUCATION & LABOR  
REPUBLICANS

**COMMITTEE  
STATEMENT**

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**Opening Statement of Rep. Lloyd Smucker (R-PA), Republican Leader  
Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Investment Hearing:  
“Scaling Up Apprenticeships: Building on the Success of International  
Apprenticeship Models”  
July 16, 2019**

“In recent years we’ve seen a surge in interest for apprenticeships across the world, as more employers and small businesses recognize the critical role apprenticeships play in the development of a skilled workforce. These important programs combine on-the-job learning and classroom-based instruction so that workers receive the development they need to get a job and keep a job. Successful workers lead to successful businesses, which grow and strengthen the U.S. economy.

Internationally apprenticeships have transformed workforce development. Today we welcome witnesses from Germany, Switzerland, and Australia so we can learn more about their unique apprenticeship systems. Understanding what is and isn’t working among the various international models is valuable, but we must also remember that no two countries are exactly alike, and international models cannot be directly implemented in the United States.

To ensure apprenticeship programs in the U.S. are successful, Committee Republicans will continue to support efforts that ease the regulatory burden many employers face when participating in registered apprenticeships. After all, employers know best what skills their employees need to succeed in the workplace. Employer-led innovation should be encouraged when it comes to work-based learning.

We must also work to better integrate education and the job force, so that in-the-classroom and on-the-job development work hand in hand to propel all students to excellence and success in a rapidly evolving economy. A crucial aspect of education reform will be addressing the job skills gap in this country, which has left thousands of jobs unfilled in our booming economy.

Apprenticeships are real ways we can give American workers and students the skills they need for successful careers. And today's hearing will allow members to learn more about the variety of apprenticeship models and how we can better innovate to help Americans pursue opportunities that lead to personal and professional growth. Thank you again to our witnesses, and I look forward to your testimonies."

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