



May 19, 2025

Senate President Karen Spilka  
Massachusetts Senate  
State House, Room 332  
Boston, MA 02133

Senator Michael Rodrigues, Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
State House, Room 212  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Senate President Spilka and Chairman Rodrigues:

The [Massachusetts Business Coalition on Skills](#) (MBCS), a coalition of 27 diverse business organizations that support strengthening workforce skills development programs and policies, appreciates the Senate's continued prioritization of reskilling our workforce of today and tomorrow by allocating critical funds throughout the State budget. The MBCS is encouraged to see significant investments in skills development, which includes line items that will create work-based learning opportunities, support essential skills development, and enhance Career Vocational/Technical Education (CVTE). As you debate on the FY26 budget, the coalition urges you to take our below priorities into consideration.

### Experiential Learning

Employers embrace experiential learning models because they are proven ways to strengthen both essential and job-specific skills. Learn-and-earn models like internships and apprenticeships benefit employees who develop skills in a real work environment. Employers also benefit because they can train employees with the specific skills for their industry or job needs. School-to-career connecting activities are public-private partnerships that provide on-the-job learning opportunities for students. The coalition urges maintaining level funding for Registered Apprenticeship Expansions (7003-0151) and increasing funding for School-to-Career Connecting Activities by adopting Amendment #623 (Lewis).

Line Item	Line Item Description	FY 2026
7003-0151	Registered Apprenticeship Expansion	\$3,315,140
7027-0019	School-to-Career Connecting Activities	\$6,531,266

### Essential Skills Development

Essential skills, also known as non-technical skills, are critical for career success. The coalition supports funding YouthBuild, the state's program that prepares students to enter the workforce and develop essential skills for a successful career and requests that level funding be maintained.

Line Item	Line Item Description	FY 2026
7061-9626	YouthBuild Grants	\$3,000,000

## Enhance CVTE

CVTE is an effective method for training our next generation of talent with the skills they need to be successful in the workforce. We would ask that you continue your critical investments by restoring the Innovation Pathways Expansion (7027-0020) to its FY25 level.

We were pleased to see the Senate earmark excess surtax funding to prioritize CVTE expansion (1596-2513) in the recently passed surtax spending bill. This funding increases student access to CVTE by expanding existing capacity. As you are well aware, the demand for seats at our Vocational-Technical schools has continued to far outpace current capacity limits, and the additional funding found within this budget (7035-0001) will help prepare our students for in-demand jobs in all regions of the Commonwealth. We would ask that you further increase funding for this important line item by adopting Amendment #657 (Cronin).

Line Item	Line Item Description	FY 2026
7027-0020	Innovation Pathways Expansion	\$4,808,927
7035-0001	CVTE Expansion Grants	\$3,118,500

## Support our Career Technical Institutes

Increasing funding for Career Technical Institutes will extend additional CVTE opportunities to adult learners by building out industry recognized credentialing pathways in technical and trade fields. This benefits both program participants and employers who are seeking talent amid a shortage of workers. The coalition urges you to increase funding for this item by adopting Amendment #692 (Gomez).

Line Item	Line Item Description	FY 2026
7002-1091	Career Technical Institutes	\$8,985,600

Thank you for prioritizing the workforce and employers of today and tomorrow. The Coalition looks forward to being a resource as the Legislature continues to prioritize skills development and attainment.

## ***Massachusetts Business Coalition on Skills***

1Berkshire  
Amplify Latinx  
Bedford Area Chamber  
Black Economic Council of Massachusetts  
Blackstone Valley Chamber  
Cape Cod Chamber  
Charles River Regional Chamber  
Greater Boston Chamber  
Kendall Square Association  
Massachusetts Technology Leadership Council  
Massachusetts Association of Insurance Agents  
Massachusetts Business Roundtable  
Massachusetts State Automobile Dealers Association

Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation  
Nashoba Valley Chamber  
Neponset River Regional Chamber  
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North Shore Chamber  
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Retailers Association of Massachusetts  
Somerville Chamber  
Springfield Regional Chamber  
Western Massachusetts Economic Development Council  
Worcester Regional Chamber