

# Youth Access to American Jobs Act of 2015

*Rep. Rick Larsen (WA-02) and Rep. Jim McDermott (WA-07)*

America needs to be telling its young people we will invest in them. One key way to do this is to make sure students get the skills needed to succeed in their careers.

The Youth Access to American Jobs Act of 2015 connects students to training in STEM skills to prepare them for good-paying jobs in manufacturing. This bill creates a pathway that engages students in STEM-related fields from their junior year in high school through community college and into an apprenticeship.

## **Youth Access to American Jobs Act of 2015:**

- Directs the Secretary of Education to award grants to ten partnerships among local educational agencies, community colleges, and state apprenticeship or labor-management training program.
- Creates a pilot program with a 2-2-2 pathway for students starting their junior year of high school, taking them through community college and into an apprenticeship.
- Emphasizes STEM and STEM-focused Career and Technical Education, programs that keep students engaged throughout their learning process, as well as giving them the scientific and practical skills they need.
- Enables local education and apprenticeship systems to work together to prepare graduates for success in manufacturing careers with STEM skills.

American manufacturing jobs can be a way to achieve the American dream for U.S. workers. An ever increasing number of jobs require at least some background in STEM, particularly in high-paying sectors like manufacturing.<sup>1</sup> Jonathan Rothwell of Brookings says in “The Hidden STEM Economy” that “the excessively professional definition of STEM jobs has led to missed opportunities to identify and support valuable training and career development at the federal level.” This bill makes sure we take advantage of those opportunities. At the heart of that challenge is making sure students are prepared to make the jump from high school to higher education and from higher education to the job market with the necessary skills at each jump.

This bill creates an educational-economic pipeline that helps shepherd students from school into their careers, giving them the confidence to know they are working intentionally toward good-paying, in-demand jobs. And by facilitating local partnerships between schools and apprenticeship programs, students will gain hands-on experience and skills directly related to workforce needs in their area.

For more information, contact Kate Craddock ([Kate.Craddock@mail.house.gov](mailto:Kate.Craddock@mail.house.gov)) in Rep. Rick Larsen’s office at (202) 225-2605, or Haig Hovsepian ([Haig.Hovsepian@mail.house.gov](mailto:Haig.Hovsepian@mail.house.gov)) in Rep. Jim McDermott’s office at (202) 225-3106.

---

<sup>1</sup>Rothwell, Jonathan. “The Hidden STEM Economy” Metropolitan Policy Institute, Brookings. June, 2013. <http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/reports/2013/06/10-stem-economy-rothwell/thehiddenstemeconomy610.pdf>