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**Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education  
U.S. House of Representatives**

**“Improving Career and Technical Education to  
Help Students Succeed in the Workforce”**

**Tuesday, October 27, 2015**

Good morning, Chairman Rokita, Ranking Member Fudge and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear today to discuss this important issue. My name is Deneece Huftalin and I serve as the President of Salt Lake Community College having served at the College in various leadership capacities for 23 years.

Salt Lake Community College is an accredited, student-focused, comprehensive community college meeting the diverse needs of the Salt Lake Valley. Home to more than 60,000 students each year, Salt Lake Community College is the largest supplier of transfer students to Utah's four-year institutions and a perennial Top 10 college nationally for total associate's degrees awarded. Twenty percent of our students identify as minority, 10% identify as having some disability, and last fall 64% of our incoming students were first-generation. We are also proud to serve 642 veteran students and have consistently been named as a top college for veterans by Military Times.

The College is also Utah's leading provider of workforce development programs, with more than 28,000 students enrolled in CTE courses last year. With 211 certificate and degree programs, SLCC offers a breadth of workforce training opportunities for Salt Lake County residents.

Career and technical education programs are designed to prepare students to enter the workforce immediately upon completion. Students can enter our

College in non-credit and credit-bearing CTE programs, and can earn short-term certificates as well as associate's degrees. Our CTE programs range from traditional vocational programs like welding and building construction, to newer programs such as biomanufacturing and digital animation.

The Carl D. Perkins Act (Perkins) is a vital source of financial support for Salt Lake Community College and for all community colleges. Over the last several years as the recession weakened state investment in higher education, Perkins funding was crucial to our ability to maintain and grow key CTE programs for our students at a time when our enrollment was rapidly increasing.

For the 2016 fiscal year, Salt Lake Community College received approximately \$1.25 million in Perkins funds. The College uses those funds to improve CTE offerings throughout the institution.

Acquiring modern equipment is imperative for state-of-the-art CTE programs. These programs are costly to maintain and often require significant financial resources to ensure we have the latest technologies and equipment to train our students to enter today's ever-advancing and technical workplace. The College has used Perkins funds to purchase a wide range of items such as Dental Hygiene X-Ray View Boxes, Materials Fatigue Testers and CNC machining equipment, all items we would be unable to purchase without the Perkins

funding. In addition, Perkins funding has allowed us to ramp up our training in Aviation Maintenance Avionics to meet industry demand and maintain high-quality training in Automotive, Diesel Training and Building Construction, all critical industries which contribute to a healthy economy.

While Perkins funding primarily supports advanced equipment needs, Perkins dollars also strengthen the essential student support services many of our students need to be successful. As we strive to increase our completion rates, Perkins funding is essential to enhance advising and disability resource center services.

As I close my remarks, I'd like to share two brief examples of how we are utilizing Perkins funding to meet the needs of both our employers and students.

A few months ago The Boeing Company in Salt Lake, on behalf of several major aerospace manufacturing companies, approached the state and its educational institutions about working collaboratively to provide more trained workers for the state's rapidly-growing aerospace industry. Within a short timeframe, we created the Utah Aerospace Pathways Program.

Under this pilot program, high school students enroll in a specialized set of courses in aerospace manufacturing. The students take one semester at a

participating high school followed by a second semester at Salt Lake Community College or the Davis Applied Technology College. They then participate in a 48-hour paid internship with local aerospace partners and, upon successful completion of their coursework and internship, will graduate with a certificate in aerospace manufacturing. The certificate allows students to begin a career immediately in the aerospace industry at a livable wage.

The training provided through this program will center on machining, fabrication and composites skills, all CTE fields that are increasingly in demand in aerospace and other advanced manufacturing industries. We are proud to be part of this collaborative effort which demonstrates best practices in CTE: using local industry data to establish relevant, strong career pathways between secondary education, higher education and industry leaders.

My second example of CTE at work relates to one of our recent graduates. As a single mother of two and a 14-year veteran of the United States Army, Darlene needed a career change. Working as a concrete contractor she knew it would only be a matter of time until the physical strain would be too much for her to manage. Darlene enrolled in our Non-Destructive Testing program with hopes of coupling her critical thinking and analytical skills with her strong work ethic. Darlene completed in two years and received multiple employment offers promising exceptional wages and benefits. Darlene's new job allows her

to provide for her family while excelling in a challenging and rewarding career.

Career and technical education has always been, and will continue to be, at the very core of our mission at Salt Lake Community College. The Perkins program is critical to our ability to provide these in-demand programs for industry and for thousands of students like Darlene who have bright futures because of the training they receive at Salt Lake Community College.

We appreciate your past support of the Perkins program and encourage your continued support as this worthwhile program is considered for reauthorization. I would be happy to address any questions from the committee.