COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6100

September 2, 2025

Lori Frazier Bearden
Acting Assistant Secretary, Employment and Training Administration
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue
Washington, DC 20210

Re: Proposed Rule: Prohibiting Illegal Discrimination in Registered Apprenticeship Programs, RIN 1205-AC21

Dear Ms. Bearden:

I write to oppose the Department of Labor's (DOL or Department) proposed rule[1] (Proposed Rule) that rescinds many of the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) provisions under 29 C.F.R. Part 30[2] (Part 30), which outlines the civil rights protections afforded to apprentices in the United States and is authorized under the *National Apprenticeship Act*[3] (NAA or Act). The Proposed Rule will greatly reduce civil rights protections for apprentices and thus harm the high standards of the RA program. I recommend that DOL withdraw the Proposed Rule and instead work with Congress to reauthorize the NAA.

The whole point of the NAA is to direct the Department of Labor "to formulate and promote the furtherance of labor standards necessary to safeguard the welfare of apprentices."[4] By choosing to pass legislation specifically targeted to the apprenticeship labor force, Congress charged the Department with creating stricter standards than those for workers in the broader labor market. If labor standards for apprentices were to simply mirror labor standards already promulgated for the entire labor force, what differentiates an apprenticeship from just any employee from the perspective of the job seeker? This is why Congress passed the *National Apprenticeship Act* in

[1] Prohibiting Illegal Discrimination in Registered Apprenticeship Programs, 90 Fed. Reg. 28947 (proposed July 2, 2025) (to be codified at 29 C.F.R. Parts 29 & 30).
[2] *Id.* The Proposed Rule states that "the proposed revision to part 30 would reaffirm the obligation of sponsors to conduct their apprenticeship programs in accordance with all applicable Federal and State laws governing nondiscrimination in the workplace, while also rescinding the provisions of the current regulation that obligate sponsors to engage in legally questionable affirmative action practices." Specifically, the Proposed Rule would rescind §§ 30.4, 30.5, 30.6, 30.7, 30.8, 30.9, and 30.11.
[3] National Apprenticeship Act, 29 U.S.C. §§ 50-50b.
[4] *Id.* § 50.

the first place, to differentiate the apprenticeship workforce from the rest. The Proposed Rule fundamentally misunderstands that point.

Specifically, the Proposed Rule rescinds important and longstanding provisions that aim to mitigate workplace discrimination for apprentices. In the place of such established protections, DOL appears to believe that existing civil rights and anti-discrimination laws—such as Title VII of the *Civil Rights Act of 1964*[5] (Title VII), the *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990* (ADA)[6], the *Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967* (ADEA)[7] and the *Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008* (GINA)[8]—are sufficient in ensuring that populations who seek apprenticeships will be protected from discrimination. Should apprentices be discriminated against, the Proposed Rule argues, there are legal remedies afforded them. But these legal remedies are merely reactionary to incidents of discrimination and do nothing to stem industry or workplace culture that creates barriers to entry for certain populations.

That is precisely why proactive policies, such as the utilization analysis in section 30.5, are so necessary. Under those provisions, a sponsor is required to compare the utilization of its apprenticed occupations by demographic groups under its own sponsorship with the same demographic groups within the relevant geographic area. For example, to use the United States as a geographic area, there were 36,027 active computer operator apprentices in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023.[9] Yet only 27.5% of those apprentices were women, even though nearly half the labor force is comprised of women[10]. What is causing that discrepancy? It is hard to say with any certitude; it could be discrimination or it could be some other cause such as occupational segregation. But absent section 30.5, an employer may never know that any demographic disparity exists. And when there are severe demographic disparities, there could be hidden discrimination occurring, even if it's unintentional through employer practices that depress the hiring and retention of apprentices in their workplace. The Supreme Court ruled in 1971 that such practices, whether intentional or not, "are fair in form, but discriminatory in operation,"[11] leading to the conclusion that Title VII does assign liability due to disparate impact discrimination.

It is exactly the means to prove such a claim of discrimination that the Proposed Rule seeks to end. Specifically, courts use a "burden-shifting framework" that requires plaintiffs to both demonstrate statistical disparities and identify specific practices that are the likely cause of an imbalance.[12] This framework is mirrored in the affirmative action requirements promulgated under 29 C.F.R. §§ 30.6, 30.7, 30.8, 30.9, and 30.10 that DOL uses to mitigate discrimination in the apprenticeship workplace. For example, sections 30.6 and 30.7 require employers to establish new utilization goals for populations where any gaps are identified under the utilization

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[5] Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000e-2000e-17.
[6] Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12101-12212.
[7] Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, 29 U.S.C. §§ 621-634.
[8] Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000ff-2000ff-11.
[9] *Apprenticeship By State*, APPRENTICESHIPUSA, https://www.apprenticeship.gov/data-and-statistics/apprentices-by-state-dashboard (last visited Aug. 05, 2025).
[10] See table 3.1. *Employment Projections*, U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS (Aug. 29, 2024), https://www.bls.gov/emp/tables/civilian-labor-force-summary.htm.
[11] Griggs v. Duke Power Co., 401 U.S. 424 (1971).
[12] APRIL ANDERSON, CONG. RESEARCH SERV., IF13057, WHAT IS DISPARATE-IMPACT DISCRIMINATION? (2025).

analysis required under section 30.5. To help attain such goals, employer sponsors are required (under parts 30.8, 30.9, and 30.10) to review their own internal processes that may be the cause of any imbalance, such as hiring practices or recruitment, and to then implement new policies to mitigate further disparate impact discrimination. Considering that the existing regulations are proactive versions of the burden of proof required by the courts under a disparate impact claim, it's nonsensical that the Proposed Rule seeks to eliminate such policies while simultaneously relying on the very framework they were based off of as their means of enforcement.

If there is any difference between the existing affirmative action requirements under Part 30 and the disparate impact burden of proof, it's that Part 30 doesn't require proof of causality to initiate enforcement. On the face of it, this may seem unfair to employers, but in practice it's a huge help, as it forces employers who may be liable for illegal discriminatory practices to avoid long and expensive litigation by employing the requirements under Part 30 and demonstrating to the registering agency that it fulfilled such requirements by creating a "compliance action plan."[13]

Even if proving causality between utilization gaps and discrimination is not a requirement, there is evidence to suggest that these affirmative action requirements may have worked at reducing gaps. These regulations were last updated in December 2016 (2016 Regulations), with the intent of increasing specificity on the actions needed to be taken by employers for EEO compliance. Following those regulations, there was a modest increase in some demographic groups' share of the total apprenticeship population. The share of women in apprenticeships jumped from 8.6% in FY 2016 to 10.7% in FY 2018 and continued to climb to 14.3% in FY 2025.[14] An increase was also seen in the share of the Hispanic/Latino apprenticeship population, which rose from 17.6% in FY 2016 to 23.8% in FY 2025 (see Chart 1 in the Appendix).[15]

These increases can't be explained by overall increases in shares of the labor force either. As Chart 2 in the Appendix shows, the increase in the Hispanic/Latino share of the apprenticeship population outpaces the increase in Hispanic/Latino share of the total labor force. The same is also true for women, as their share of the total labor force has remained relatively flat since 2015[16], while women's participation in the apprenticeship workforce has grown[17].

To be clear, this is not evidence of a robust causal link between the 2016 Regulations and the increase in the share of the apprenticeship population for women and Hispanics/Latinos. Further, as demonstrated in Chart 1, not every demographic group saw increases in participation. For example, Asian and Black participation in apprenticeships largely remained unchanged. However, the data should at least be encouraging considering the first Trump Administration did

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[13] Should a sponsor to be found to not be complying with Part 30, "the sponsor must implement a compliance action plan within 30 days of receiving the notice from the Registration Agency upholding its Findings." 29 C.F.R. § 30.13.
[14] Interactive Apprenticeship Data, ApprenticeshipUSA (Jan. 31, 2025), https://www.apprenticeship.gov/data-and-statistics/apprentices-by-state-dashboard.
[15] *Id.*
[16] Women in the Labor Force, Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey, seasonally adjusted, U.S. BUREAU OF LAB. STATISTICS (June. 25, 2024), https://www.bls.gov/cps/demographics/women-labor-force.htm#:~:text=Overview%20of%20women's%20participation%20in,Both%20series%20began%20in%201948.)&text=The%20Current%20Population%20Survey%20(CPS,search%20or%20the%20tables%20below.
[17] Interactive Apprenticeship Data, *supra* note 14.

very little to implement the 2016 Regulations; imagine what kind of effect the EEO regulations could have on the diversity of apprentices if robust enforcement of current Part 30 were effectuated. By rescinding sections 30.5 through 30.10, DOL is risking reverting back to pre-2016 utilization outcomes, which would reverse the increased diversity of the apprenticeship workforce.

Practical Effects of Removing EEO Regulations and Gaps in Civil Rights Coverage

The practical effect of rolling back comprehensive equal employment opportunity protections in apprenticeship programs is that it will limit available remedies to address discrimination in apprenticeship programs. By eliminating the longstanding prohibition on discrimination against apprentices based on certain protected characteristics in the current section 30.3 of the regulation and instead aligning the regulation with existing civil rights laws applicable in the private sector, the Proposed Rule adopts the small employer carveouts of these civil rights laws, which not only limits the coverage of antidiscrimination requirements but also eliminates the authority of the Department to take enforcement action against small employer sponsors who engage in discrimination.

The Proposed Rule change for section 30.5—*Nondiscrimination compliance reviews and enforcement*—defines a violation of equal opportunity requirements where there is a "final determination of a violation of an applicable nondiscrimination law."[18] As a result, for sponsors of apprenticeship programs who employ fewer than 15 employees (or fewer than 20 employees in the case of ADEA[19]) and engage in discrimination against an apprentice on a protected characteristic, there would be no violation, as Title VII, ADA, ADEA, and GINA do not apply to these employers.[20] For apprentices who work for small employer sponsors, DOL will lack the authority under the Proposed Rule to either suspend the sponsor's right to register new apprentices or initiate deregistration proceedings in accordance with the proposed new section 30.5(c).[21] This problem is created by the fact that DOL would only use deregistration in

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[18] Prohibiting Illegal Discrimination in Registered Apprenticeship Programs, *supra* note 1, at 28975.
[19] *Fact Sheet: Age Discrimination, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission*, EEOC (Jan. 15, 1997), https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/fact-sheet-age-discrimination.
[20] Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2000e(b).
[21] Currently, 29 C.F.R. § 30.3(a)(1) prohibits discrimination by a sponsor of a registered apprenticeship program against an apprentice or an apprentice applicant for an apprenticeship based on their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age (40 or over), genetic information, or disability and then brings in the standards and defenses in various civil rights statutes, including Title VII, 29 C.F.R. § 30.3(a)(2), and in determining whether a sponsor has engaged in an unlawful practice under 29 C.F.R. § 30.3(a)(1). On December 19, 2016, the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor issued a final rule to update the equal opportunity standards contained in Part 30 to include age (40 or older), genetic information, sexual orientation, and disability. In providing an explanation regarding adding a requirement for workplace accommodations for apprentices with disabilities, "[s]ince most, if not all, sponsors already are subject to the ADA as amended, and if a Federal contractor to section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act, sponsors already have a duty under existing law to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities, and thus there is no new burden associated with any duty to provide reasonable accommodation under part 30, as that duty already exists under Federal law. For any sponsor that may not already be required under the law to provide such accommodations (e.g., any sponsor with fewer than 15 employees would not be covered by the ADA), we expect the resulting burden to be small." Apprenticeship

instances when "a competent enforcement agency or court issues a final determination of unlawful discrimination" under Title VII, ADA, ADEA, and GINA, which do not afford apprentices coverage under their respective statutes when working for small employers.

The Proposed Rule is incorrect in its assertion that the "protected characteristics contained in §30.3(a) of the current part 30 are duplicative of the nondiscrimination requirements contained in a number of Federal civil rights statutes."[22] As a result, the Proposed Rule fails to account for the harm to apprentices nor does it acknowledge the limitations to DOL's authority to remedy discrimination in apprenticeship programs because of this change. For these reasons, changes to section 30.3 should be rejected and the longstanding regulation prohibiting discrimination against apprentices on the basis of protected characteristics in apprenticeship programs should be maintained.

Another negative effect from the Proposed Rule, specifically by rescinding the utilization analysis requirements under section 30.5, will be that DOL will be incapable of reviewing the rules' efficacy as it relates to claims of harassment and discrimination. The Proposed Rule claims that relying off the competencies and resources of the courts "will lead to … improved accountability, greater clarity for stakeholders, and more relevant and effective relief for any victims of unlawful discrimination, harassment, or other illegal treatment in the registered apprenticeship context."[23] However, by rescinding the requirements of tracking demographic data, or data of any kind, how will DOL know if its claims of increased relief will come to fruition? The answer is, they won't. By failing to offer any solution of its own to collect relevant demographic data or enforcement outcomes, DOL is skirting its responsibility to ensure the welfare of apprentices as mandated by Congress.

Equal Employment Opportunities Enforcement

The Proposed Rule is correct in arguing that DOL's Office of Apprenticeship (OA) doesn't currently have the capacity to properly enforce the equal employment opportunities regulations under 29 C.F.R. Part 30. With over 27,000 registered apprenticeship programs across the country[24], there are not enough career staff to perform compliance reviews, as required under section 30.13. Further, I acknowledge and appreciate the Proposed Rule's statement that "Registration staff have the knowledge and experience to assess registered apprenticeship program quality" but that they are not necessarily "well-positioned, and are not suitably equipped, to make the legal determinations" in cases of potential discrimination.[25]

Programs; Equal Employment Opportunity, 81 Fed. Reg. 92026, 92095 (Dec. 19, 2016) (codified at 29 C.F.R. Parts 29 and 30).

[22] Prohibiting Illegal Discrimination in Registered Apprenticeship Programs, *supra* note 1, at 28950.

[23] *Id*. at 28958.

[24] *FY 2021 Registered Apprenticeship Sponsors and Trends,* U.S. DEP'T OF LAB., https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/apprenticeship/about/statistics/2021#:~:text=There%20were%20nearly%2027%2C000%20registered,established%20nationwide%20in%20FY%202021 (last visited Aug. 05, 2025).

[25] Prohibiting Illegal Discrimination in Registered Apprenticeship Programs, *supra* note 1, at 28958.

However, I do not agree that Registration Agency staff lacks the knowledge and experience to ensure compliance with the "affirmative action requirements" and think building staff capacity to implement compliance reviews is more than feasible. The existing regulations outline completely normal compliance procedures that are common throughout DOL's accountability and oversight functions, such as "desk audits of records submitted to the Registration Agency" and "on-site reviews conducted at the sponsor's establishment that may involve examination of records."[26] These are common functions that DOL staff, such as wage and hour investigators, perform regularly. In fact, I think there are viable solutions to these challenges that simply require a willingness to innovate rather than throwing the baby out with the bathwater.

Considering the scope of the registration program, it's clear that more staff is needed to perform the compliance reviews of affirmative action requirements stipulated in section 30.13. This is a solvable issue that would only require a modest increase in full-time employees (FTE) hired to perform these reviews. Alternatively, if the current Administration is opposed to hiring more staff, I believe that State Apprenticeship Agencies (SAA) are uniquely positioned to perform these compliance reviews. In prior congresses, I have introduced legislation entitled the *National Apprenticeship Act of 2023*, which authorized funding to be obligated to SAAs through a formula and specifically used for the purpose of building staff capacity for registration compliance.[27]

Misinterpreting *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard*, *Ames v. Ohio Department of Youth Services*, and the ADA

How DOL is Misinterpreting Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard

This Administration's interpretation of the narrow holding in *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard* (*SFFA*) in the Proposed Rule is a clear misapplication of judicial law. To begin, the Administration incorrectly equates affirmative action planning and demographic benchmarking with the race-based selection preferences that the Supreme Court invalidated in *SFFA*. *SFFA* was narrowly focused on race-conscious admissions in higher education.[28] 29 C.F.R. Part 30 does not involve selection preferences; by law, neither race, sex, nor any other protected class identification can be used to choose apprenticeships. The current regulations establish goals, not mandates, and there is no indication that the Court in *SFFA* intended for its narrow holding to extend to race-conscious outreach or broader anti-discrimination efforts outside the bounds of education.[29] In the current Proposed Rule, the Administration did not offer any evidence that race, sex, or protected identity was being used as a determining factor in any hiring decision by apprenticeship programs that have been operating under this guidance for years.

How DOL is Misinterpreting Ames v. Ohio Department of Youth Services

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[26] 29 C.F.R. § 30.13(a).
[27] H.R. 2851, 118th Cong. (2023).
[28] Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President & Fellows of Harvard Coll., 600 U.S. 181 (2023).
[29] Nathan A. Adams, *U.S. Supreme Court Rules Race-Conscious College Admissions Are Unconstitutional*, HOLLAND & KNIGHT (June 29, 2023), Departments of Education, Justice Publish Initial Affirmative Action Decision Guidance | Insights | Holland & Knight.

Similar to the *SFFA* case, the Proposed Rule incorrectly invokes *Ames v. Ohio Department of Youth Services* (*Ames*) as evidence that DOL's current affirmative action tools are unconstitutional. That is erroneous because the *Ames* decision focused on burden-shifting standards in individual employment disputes.[30] The Court did not rule on the legality of proactive outreach, non-binding affirmative action plans, or utilization goals in federally administered training programs.

The Trump Administration's reliance on *SFFA* and *Ames* throughout the Proposed Rule is legally misplaced. Such cases do not invalidate the anti-discrimination framework in 29 C.F.R. Part 30 or even address their policy objectives. Rather, *SFFA* and *Ames* confirm that federal agencies must draw careful distinctions between unlawful preferences and lawful efforts to ensure equal opportunity in attempting to meet their ambitious apprenticeship employment goals. As seen in the lack of quotas, non-binding nature, and flexible requirements in 29 C.F.R. Part 30, the existing regulations already do so.

How DOL is Misinterpreting ADA

Contrary to the suggestion in this Proposed Rule, asking applicants to voluntarily disclose a disability, as is currently required by 29 C.F.R. § 30.11, is not a violation of the ADA's prohibition on disability related pre-employment inquiries. The affirmative action requirements in Section 503 were in place when the ADA was passed in 1990, although the utilization goal would come later in regulations, when implementing an affirmative action plan and reporting on its success required employers to know whether they are hiring individuals with disabilities but did not end either the prohibition on pre-employment inquiries or affirmative action for people with disabilities. In fact, the National Council on Disability report containing the first draft of the ADA refers to the positive steps some companies were taking at the time to identify and employ qualified individuals with disabilities.[31]

In 2018, during the first Trump Administration, the EEOC declared that for more than 20 years it had been recognized that "the ADA permits affirmative action on behalf of individuals with disabilities, whether legally required or voluntarily undertaken."[32] That EEOC letter went on to reaffirm enforcement guidance from 1995 on "Preemployment Disability-Related Questions and Medical Examinations Under the ADA"[33] in which the EEOC explained that employers may ask job applicants to voluntarily self-identify as individuals with disabilities for affirmative action purposes provided that the employer: (1) is undertaking affirmative action pursuant to either a legal requirement *or* voluntarily to benefit individuals with disabilities; (2) states clearly that the

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[30] Ames v. Ohio Department of Youth Services, 605 U.S. ___ (2025).

[31] *Toward Independence: An Assessment of Federal Laws and Programs Affecting Persons with Disabilities--With Legislative Recommendations*, NAT'L COUNCIL ON DISABILITY (Feb. 1, 1986), https://www.ncd.gov/report/national-disability-policy-a-progress-report-february-1986/.

[32] *EEOC Informal Discussion Letter*, EEOC (July10, 2018), https://www.eeoc.gov/foia/eeoc-informal-discussion letter-320.

[33] *Enforcement Guidance: Preemployment Disability-Related Questions and Medical Examinations*, EEOC (Oct. 10, 1995), www.eeoc.gov/policy/docs/preemp.html.

information is being used solely in connection with its affirmative action obligations or efforts; and (3) states clearly that the information is being requested on a voluntary basis, that it will be kept confidential in accordance with the ADA, that refusal to provide it will not subject the applicant to any adverse treatment, and that it will be used only in accordance with the ADA.[34] While I appreciate DOL's concern for upholding the ADA, in this case the concern is misplaced and in fact harmful.

The Proposed Rule Lacks Compelling Evidence that it will Lead to Apprenticeship Growth

The Proposed Rule states that eliminating the administrative burden of the affirmative action requirements will help the Administration achieve its goal of reaching 1 million active apprentices.[35] However, it is not clear how many new programs will be registered under the new, so called "streamlined" approach to Part 30. In fact, in the Proposed Rule itself, the Administration admits that it is unclear what effect the Proposed Rule will have on apprenticeship growth, stating: "While the Department expects that the number of registered apprentices will increase after Part 30 is streamlined…it is difficult to quantify how much the streamlining of Part 30 will increase the growth of apprenticeship programs."[36]

If the Administration wants to grow the number of apprentices, I encourage it to look at President Trump's first term as guidance. Over the course of his first 4 years in office, President Trump nearly doubled the funding for apprenticeships, jumping from $95 million in FY 2017 to $185 million in FY 2021.[37] While I am encouraged by the Trump Administration seeking to increase the number of active apprentices to 1 million, I am concerned by the lack of bold thinking. If there were 1 million active apprentices today, that would only account for roughly 0.6% of the total labor force.[38] That is nowhere near other similar economies, like Canada, United Kingdom, and Australia, whose apprenticeship share of the labor force was roughly 2% in 2022.[39]

To significantly increase the number of apprentices, investments in apprenticeships would need to be in the billions of dollars, not millions. But instead of proposing increasing funding to this level, the Trump Administration's efforts so far have been this Proposed Rule and requiring 10% of a new block grant for workforce development to go to Registered Apprenticeships[40], which would only account for $296 million, an $11 million increase over existing funding. This is especially deflating when one considers the Administration recently passed a budget

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[34] *Id.*
[35] Prohibiting Illegal Discrimination in Registered Apprenticeship Programs, *supra* note 1, at 28953.
[36] *Id*. at 28961.
[37] U.S. DEP'T OF LAB., FY 2026 DEPARTMENT OF LABOR BUDGET SUMMARY TABLES 5 (2025), https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/general/budget/2026/CBJ-2026-V1-02.pdf.
[38] As of July 2025, there were 170,342,000 people in the U.S. labor force. Employment Situation Summary Table A, Household data, seasonally adjusted, U.S. BUREAU OF LAB. STATISTICS (Aug. 1, 2025), https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.a.htm.
[39] Robert I. Lerman, The State of Apprenticeship in the US: A Plan for Scale (July 2022), https://apprenticeshipsforamerica.org/resources/afa-publications/19/the-state-of-apprenticeship-in-the-us-a-plan-for-scale.
[40] U.S. DEP'T OF LAB., FY 2026 DEPARTMENT OF LABOR BUDGET SUMMARY TABLES, *supra* note 39.

reconciliation bill that spent $5.9 trillion on tax cuts and new spending without spending a dime on apprenticeships[41].

In contrast, when I was Chairman of the Committee on Education and Labor, we marked up a portion of the *Build Back Better Act* that invested $5 billion in apprenticeships.[42] But funding alone isn't enough to scale apprenticeships in this country; we also need to develop the legal infrastructure to allow for future growth. Under the *National Apprenticeship Act of 2023*[43], we would have created an infrastructure that would have scaled apprenticeship programs in the U.S. by codifying the Office of Apprenticeship and State Apprenticeship Agencies (SAAs) as registration entities. We also would have authorized funding specifically for the OA, formula funding to the states, and $3 billion in grants to expand apprenticeships in non-traditional occupations. Simply cutting some regulations *may* squeeze out a marginally higher number of active apprentices, but it does not create a long-lasting infrastructure that will truly scale our apprenticeship system to meet the needs of employers and workers.

Conclusion

For the reasons discussed above, I urge the Department to withdraw the Proposed Rule. However, I wish to reiterate that I am encouraged that this Administration has seen the value in RAs. Further, I share the Administration's goal in increasing the number of RA programs in the United States. I hope the Administration will look at some of my ideas in the *National Apprenticeship Act of 2023* as how to best accomplish such a goal.

Instead of moving forward with the Proposed Rule, I encourage the Administration to work with Congress in reauthorizing the NAA. Having never been reauthorized, the original statute has undergone regulatory changes by multiple Administrations over the years that have been challenging for businesses. These challenges can be addressed if the Trump Administration is willing to work with Congress to reauthorize the NAA in the 119th Congress.

Sincerely,

ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT
Ranking Member

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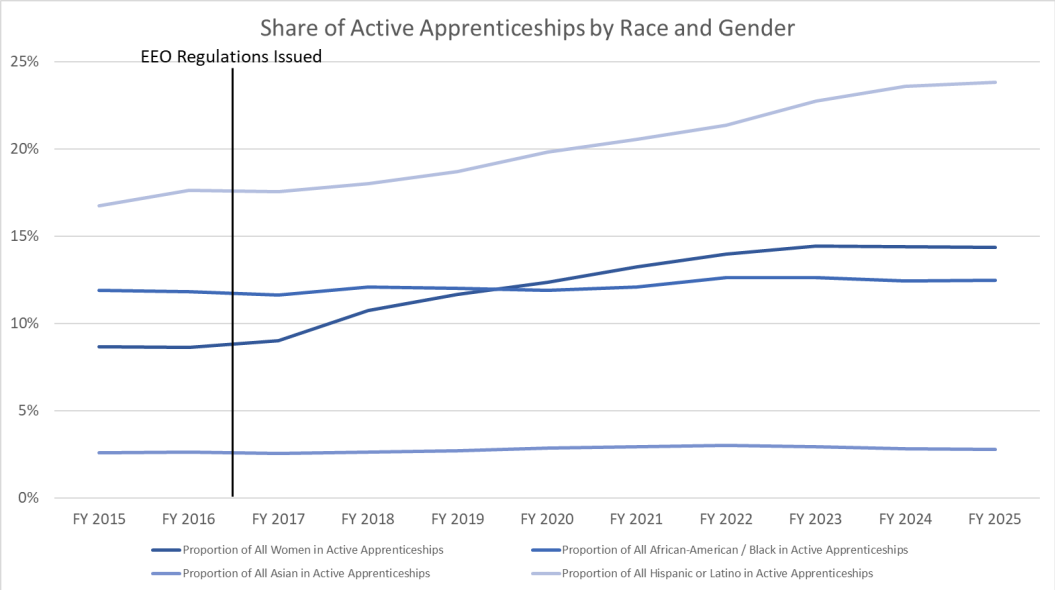
[41] What's In the One Big Beautiful Bill Act?, Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget (Aug. 4, 2025), https://www.crfb.org/blogs/whats-one-big-beautiful-bill-act.
[42] Committee Print to comply with the Reconciliation Directive included in Section 2002 of the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2022, S. Con. Res. 14 before the H. Comm on Education and Labor, 117th Cong. (2021), https://democrats-edworkforce.house.gov/hearings/committee-print-to-comply-with-the-reconciliation-directive-included-in-section-2002-of-the-concurrent-resolution-on-the-budget-for-fiscal-year-2022-s-con-res-14.
[43] H.R. 2851, *supra* note 28.

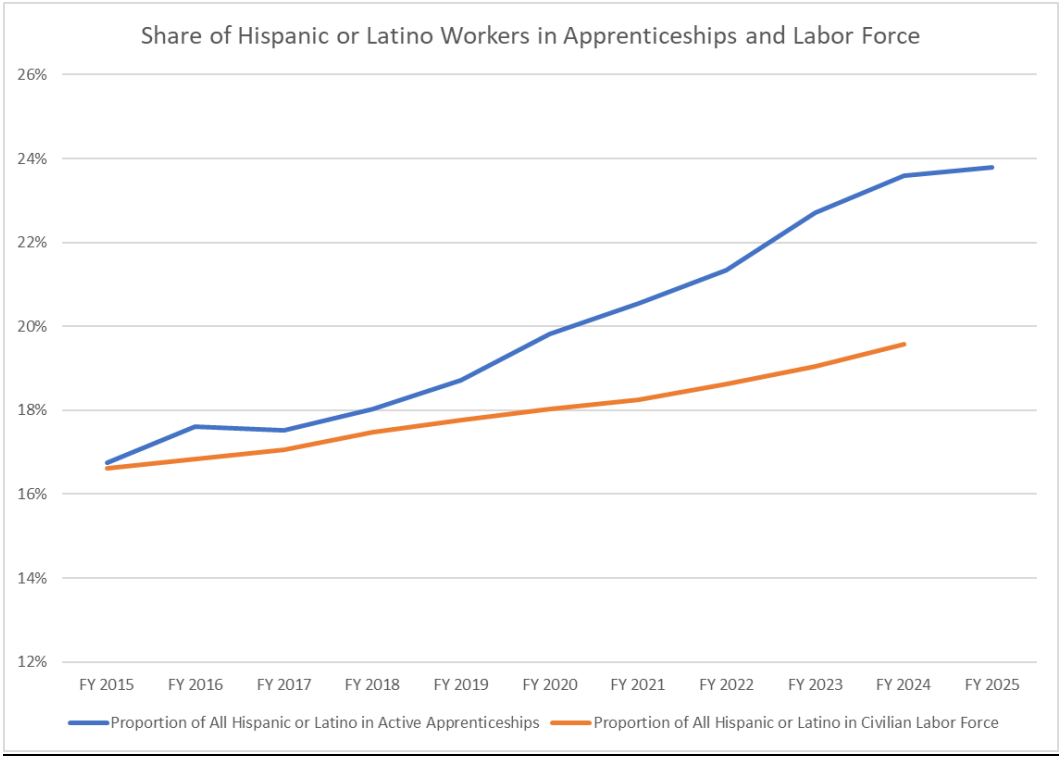
Appendix

Chart 1



*data from Interactive Apprenticeship Data, ApprenticeshipUSA (Jan. 31, 2025), https://www.apprenticeship.gov/data-and-statistics/apprentices-by-state-dashboard

Chart 2



*Data from Interactive Apprenticeship Data, ApprenticeshipUSA (Jan. 31, 2025), https://www.apprenticeship.gov/data-and-statistics/apprentices-by-state-dashboard