



January 9, 2017

The Honorable Lamar Alexander, Chairman  
U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions  
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Alexander:

On behalf of Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC), a national construction industry trade association with 70 chapters representing nearly 21,000 members, we enthusiastically encourage you to confirm Betsy DeVos as the next United States Secretary of Education.

As the next Secretary of Education, we know Betsy DeVos is committed to career readiness and will be a career technical education (CTE) champion on behalf of American students. By encouraging CTE opportunities in our nation's schools, Betsy DeVos will help young men and women enter onto nationally portable, industry-recognized training programs and produce a new generation of safe, skilled and productive craft professionals.

This is vitally important to our industry and our national economy, as well as the network of 501c(3) and c(4) education and training facilities around the United States administered by ABC. At ABC, we don't just build buildings, we build people. In 2016, more than 100,000 students enrolled in these not-for-profit post-secondary training programs and put themselves on the path to a high-wage career. According to the Construction Labor Market Analyzer, our industry is facing a shortage of 1.1 million skilled construction workers over the next decade, and it is imperative that the next Secretary of Education understands and embraces CTE so students have more opportunities to access these in-demand careers. Betsy DeVos has demonstrated her commitment in both word and deed to making CTE a priority.

As the demand for highly skilled workers increases, our nation's schools need to better embrace rigorous and relevant career and technical education. Betsy DeVos knows this, and we believe she is committed to providing students and parents the tools to access vital industry-driven skills training and building a career-ready workforce the U.S. economy can rely upon.

Moreover, we have faith and confidence that as Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos will continue her impressive track record of fighting to make sure students are well-served, parents are empowered and the education system is held accountable for the outcome of its students.

It is with great optimism and conviction, therefore, that we urge a swift confirmation of Betsy DeVos as our nation's next Secretary of Education.

Sincerely,

Kristen Swearingen  
Vice President of Legislative & Political Affairs