

THE CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS INDUSTRY **ON THE ISSUES**



Promoting Workforce Development

The construction materials industry—employing hundreds of thousands of workers across the country—strongly supports federal policies and funding that ensure aggregates, asphalt and concrete producers can access the skilled employees needed to produce critical construction materials. Persistent shortages of skilled labor (exacerbated by an aging workforce and retirements) have already forced many producers to turn away business, underscoring the urgent need for sustained investment in workforce development, training programs, apprenticeships and recruitment initiatives.

Career and Technical Education

■ Our industry supports the modernization of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs in high schools and community colleges. We thank Congress for passing full-year CTE funding during the FY2026 appropriations process. The annual funding helps support programs that are training the next generation of workers for in-demand jobs in the construction industry. We now ask Congress to build on this progress by passing full-year CTE funding in the FY2027 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill. We also support efforts to reauthorize the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act to improve alignment with workforce needs. Greater investment in CTE will help the construction materials industry by creating a larger pipeline of skilled, job-ready workers to meet our growing needs.

Workforce Pell

■ Our industry supports the implementation of the new Workforce Pell Grant program, which took effect on July 1, 2026. This historic expansion now allows Pell Grants to support short-term (8–15 week) training programs that prepare students for high-demand careers in the construction industry, including quarry operations, heavy equipment skills and maintenance, commercial driver's licenses and safety credentials. We urge policymakers to prioritize and quickly approve quality construction-related programs at community colleges. By removing implementation barriers and encouraging strong industry-education partnerships, we can help close the skilled-labor gap, train the next generation of workers and strengthen America's infrastructure supply chain.

Veterans

■ According to recent Bureau of Labor Statistics data, veterans make up about 6.6 percent of the construction workforce. They bring strong leadership, equipment operation and maintenance skills, logistics experience, safety expertise, and

a proven work ethic—skills that transfer directly to asphalt and concrete production, quarry operations, plant management, heavy equipment and safety roles. NAPA, NRMCA and NSSGA strongly support efforts to connect veterans with careers in our industry. Key federal programs include the Jobs for Veterans State Grants, the HIRE Vets Medallion Award Program, and the Transition Assistance Program. By championing these programs, our industry can solve staffing shortages, while honoring the service of our nation's veterans.

Apprenticeships

■ Apprenticeships provide high-quality career pathways, allowing employers to develop and prepare their future workforce and individuals to receive paid work experience, classroom instruction and portable, nationally recognized credentials. We strongly support federal efforts to expand apprenticeship opportunities — including through the reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, which funds key programs such as On-the-Job Training and Individual Training Accounts. This proven “earn while you learn” model effectively closes skills gaps, delivers strong employment and earnings outcomes, and strengthens the overall workforce.

Expanding Eligible Workforce

■ We urge Congress to examine and update our immigration laws and provide new opportunities to increase the legal workforce in the United States. The current system is outdated and fails to meet the demands of modern industries, including the construction materials industry, where certain projects may be possible only at certain times of the year. By reforming immigration policies to expand access to employment-based visas and streamline legal pathways for foreign workers in a timely manner, we can address critical labor shortages and support economic growth. These reforms should prioritize efficiency, transparency and fairness, ensuring that businesses can hire the talent they need while upholding national security and worker protections. A modernized immigration framework is essential to building a resilient, competitive workforce that meets the evolving needs of our country.

For more information, please contact staff at:

