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December 3, 2024

Senator Bernie Sanders, Chairman
 Senator Bill Cassidy, Ranking Member
 US Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions
 428 Senate Dirksen Office Building
 Washington, DC 20510

On behalf of the American Workforce Coalition (AWC), thank you for your ongoing support of the Older Americans Act (OAA) and the programs it advances. AWC represents a diverse coalition of member organizations that support older workers in the country through workforce development programs. AWC’s mission is to build national movement around the value of our aging American workforce and the creation of more equitable solutions to workforce disparities.

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), authorized under the OAA, is an integral part of what we do, and we appreciate your commitment to continuing this vital program, as SCSEP is the only federal employment program dedicated to helping older Americans return to the workforce.

SCSEP’s goals established by Congress are to promote individual economic self-sufficiency and to increase unsubsidized employment of unemployed Americans age 55 and older. SCSEP continues to meet these goals through the paychecks its job-seekers earn. Moreover, about half of SCSEP’s job-seekers enter unsubsidized employment after exiting the program. This high rate of success is most noteworthy considering SCSEP serves the most-in-need seniors.

AWC stands as an ally in support of this OAA reauthorization bill. We appreciate your leadership and are here to provide any technical expertise, operational detail, and program insights that may be helpful as this bill is further considered. For its part, Congress has signaled an interest in expanded job-seeker placement and program reach by incorporating new program requirements into SCSEP. AWC stands ready to collaborate toward the continuous improvement of this critical program.





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Both Congress and AWC agree that expanding the success of SCSEP is the ultimate goal. In partnership with the Department of Labor, AWC members continuously enhance their workforce development programs to help more job-seekers and expand our reach. In the last two years, there has been a coordinated effort to increase technical upskilling and digital training. Currently, the program has launched a new demonstration project through a sector strategy demonstration grant to create formalized employer relationships and ensure SCSEP training is aligned with industry needs. Both of these recent developments, combined with the newly functional performance management database, have positioned the program with a new intensity toward getting older job seekers into good jobs for the benefit of our national economy.

Over the course of AWC members' collective years of experience, we have offered decades of workforce development programs empowering Black & African American, Hispanic and Latino, Indigenous, Asian Pacific, Pacific Islander, women, 65+, and veteran job seekers. Through SCSEP alone, about 55,000 older adults from every state and congressional district receive part-time, on-the-job training.

We believe the AWC and the bipartisan Congressional leaders who drafted this OAA reauthorization bill have a shared goal – to strengthen and enhance the services provided to older Americans, particularly workforce development. As SCSEP is the only federally funded workforce development program targeted for workforce reentry for the 55+ community, it is imperative that we bolster it.

Thank you,

Mr. Gary A. Officer
 President & Chief Executive Officer
 The Center for Workforce Inclusion

