

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 2, 2025

The Honorable Lori Chavez-DeRemer
Secretary of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Secretary Chavez-DeRemer,

We write to express our deep concern regarding the Department of Labor's decision to implement a "phased pause" for Job Corps centers throughout the United States, which will impact approximately 25,000 students nationwide. With centers located in all 50 states, this decision will have broad and far-reaching consequences. In Michigan alone, Job Corps has three campuses in the main population centers throughout our state, including Kent County, Wayne County, and Genesee County. Together, these three centers support more than 700 students who are learning critical skills essential to securing meaningful employment that allows them to give back to their communities.

The Department's decision to initiate a "phased pause" in operations was made without advance notice to the training centers, leaving staff and students scrambling. This abrupt disruption has destabilized our communities, which rely on these centers. We understand and share the Department's interest in improving cost-efficiency and long-term effectiveness. Indeed, there is much work to be done to enhance the services here. But an unplanned and abrupt pause in all operations does not support these goals. Instead, it derails the lives of thousands of young people and dedicated staff committed to strengthening our country's workforce, at a time of great worker shortage across the state.

Job Corps has provided training to more than 2 million individuals since its founding. Studies have shown that people enrolled in Job Corps have a 21 percent increased likelihood of obtaining a GED certificate, and a 31 percent increase in obtaining vocational certificates.¹ Other studies have demonstrated that Job Corps alumni consistently benefit from the program through higher wages and reduced reliance on public assistance, evidence of the long-term return on investment that Job Corps delivers.

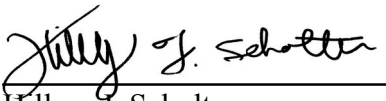
¹ <https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/aer.98.5.1864>

We respectfully request a response to the following questions no later than June 16:

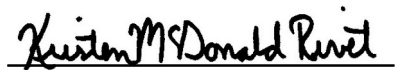
1. The Department of Labor has stated they are working to “assist current students in advancing their training and connecting them with education and employment opportunities.”² However, as of today, June 2, the staff at our Job Corps centers have not received any guidance of this nature. What specific actions will the Department take to continue student training and ensure students are not negatively impacted during this time? Specifically:
 - a. Where will housed students live, and how will their transition to new housing be facilitated?
 - b. Where will students continue their job training?
 - c. Who within the Department of Labor will oversee the transition to new placements?
2. When will Job Corps centers be notified of these plans?
3. How long will the Department’s review be, and is there a plan to notify Job Centers of any subsequent changes to funding or programming after this review?
4. How will the Department work to ensure state and local workforce partners have the support and resources needed to accommodate new students and ensure the completion of their training?

We respectfully urge that the Department take swift action to reverse this “phased pause” of Jobs Corps operations and support our students, staff, and communities that rely on this program. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Hillary J. Scholten
Member of Congress



Kristen McDonald Rivet
Member of Congress



Shri Thanedar
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress